SP-70(63)



# SPECIAL PUBLICATION

# REPORT OF THE ARCTIC ICE OBSERVING AND FORECASTING PROGRAM—1963

Forecasting Branch
Oceanographic Prediction Division

**MAY 1965** 

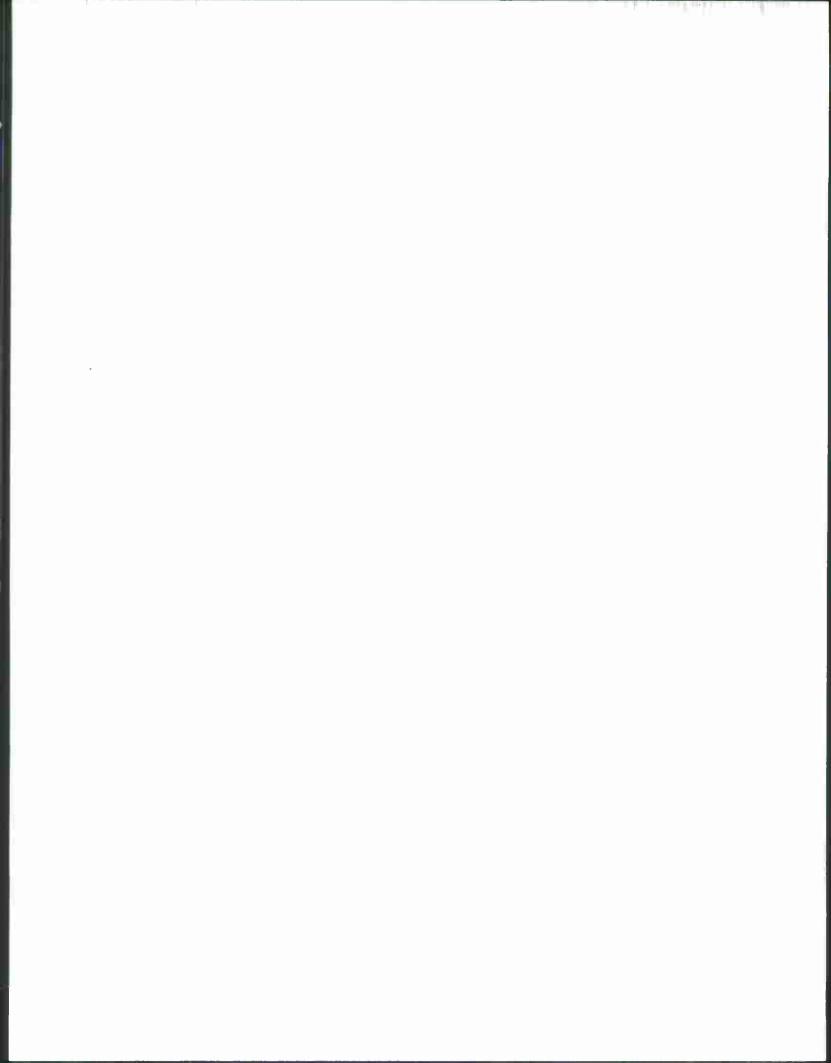


U. S. NAVAL OCEANOGRAPHIC OFFICE
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# ABSTRACT

The ice program conducted by the Oceanographic Office principally in support of 1963 MSTS Arctic Operations is covered by this report. Methods of collection and dissemination of ice data, ice forecasting, forecast verification, and various allied ice projects are discussed. A summary of ice conditions in the North American Arctic is given graphically for 6-day periods from January through December.



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#### FOREWORD

This publication is the twelfth in a series of annual reports on ice observing and forecasting programs conducted by the Oceanographic Office. These programs, in addition to providing direct support to resupply operations conducted by the Military Sea Transportation Service, have provided a comprehensive collection of ice information.

This historical information, accumulated primarily by aerial reconnaissance, has not only been extremely valuable in preparation of ice forecasts but is necessary to the overall efficient planning and successful execution of Arctic operations.

DENYS W. MNOLL

Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy

Commander

U.S. Naval Oceanographic Office

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#### PART I - EASTERN ARCTIC

#### 1. General

The ice forecasting and observing program, designed to support Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS) resupply operations in the Eastern Arctic during 1963, was conducted by the U.S. Naval Oceanographic Office (NAVOCEANO). The major geographic areas and forecast sectors into which the North American Arctic has been divided for purposes of this study are shown in figure 1. As in past years, MSTS, the Canadian Department of Transport (DOT), and commercial shipping companies conducted resupply operations in the eastern, central, and western areas (figure 1), respectively. Place names referred to in the text are presented in figure 2.

## 2. Ice Forecasting

The various phases of the overall ice forecasting program in support of MSTS Eastern Arctic resupply operations were coordinated by NAVOCEANO.

# a. Long-Range Ice Outlook

The Long-Range Ice Outlook, Eastern Arctic, published during April 1963, was designed to give MSTS a general picture of expected ice conditions during the resupply season. In addition to being distributed to all cognizant commands, the Long-Range Outlook was presented at formal briefings to COMSTS and COMSTSLANTAREA. Forecasts of ice disintegration and opening dates were based on climatic and oceanographic factors affecting ice conditions during the previous fall and winter, a study of similar historical data along with a comprehensive aerial survey of ice conditions from 15 to 25 March, and the latest 30-day weather forecast issued by the U.S. Weather Bureau. Opening dates were determined by estimating times when ice concentrations would permit ships to enter various ports with and without icebreaker escort. Historical freezeup dates and iceberg information were also included in the Outlook.

# b. Thirty-Day Ice Forecasts

These long-range forecasts, issued from NAVOCEANO, began on 20 May and continued until 20 November. These forecasts were revisions of the Long-Range Outlook based on aerial ice reconnaissance, historical ice information, and the Weather Bureau 30-day outlooks. Forecasts made later in the season contained freezeup information.

# c. Short-Range Ice Forecasts

The 5-day forecasts from NAVOCEANO began on 28 May. From 10 June until 25 July, 48-hour and 5-day forecasts were prepared at the NAVOCEANO ice forecast facility in Argentia. The 48-hour forecasts were issued daily by radioteletype, and the 5-day forecasts were issued three times a week

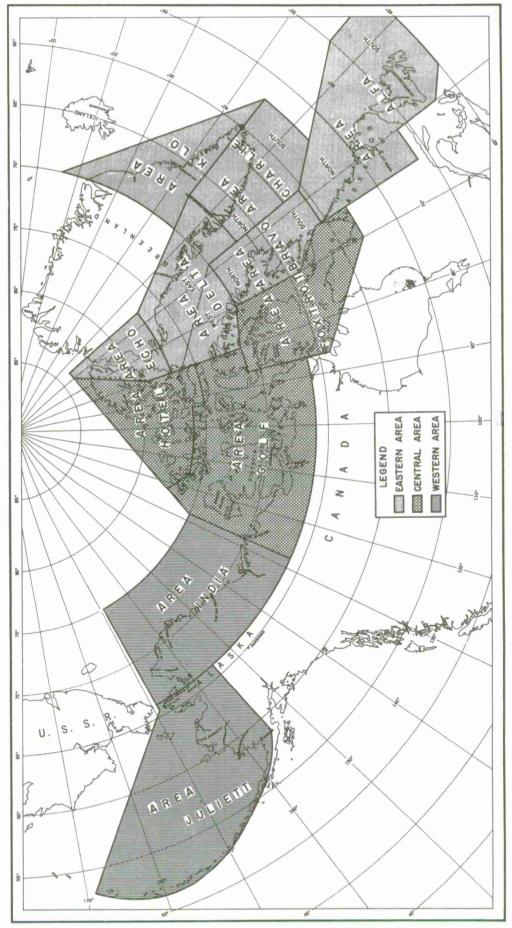


FIGURE I ICE FORECAST SECTORS

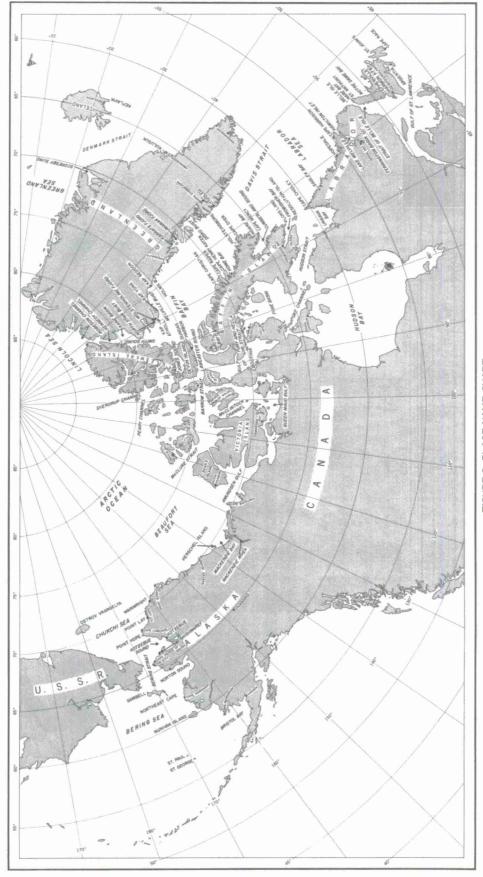


FIGURE 2 PLACE NAME CHART

JANUARY FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
EASTERN ARCTIC					-					
SONDRESTROM								1116111111111	000000	
GOOSE BAY			2	NAME OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PR	01.60					
THULE								911111		, QN B
KULUSUK					XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX XXXXX				FORECA 4B-HOL	FORECAST PERIOD
CABOT STRAIT									5 - DAY	
ITIVDLEQ			1001	(18111111)					15-DAY	
USCGC EVERGREEN									20-05	
BAFFIN BAY						111111111111111111111111111111111111111		101010101111	10111111	
WESTERN ARCTIC										
COMALSEAFRON										
USCGC NORTHWIND						111011111111111111111111111111111111111				
USS STATEN ISLAND										

FIGURE 3 SUMMARY OF ICE FORECASTS FOR EASTERN AND WESTERN ARCTIC—1963

as 3-day outlooks appended to the daily forecasts.

Charts of observed and 48-hour prognostic ice conditions were transmitted by radio facsimile. These charts provided tactical support to ships engaged in resupply operations and presented areas of optimum ice navigation. Ice forecasts for both the eastern and western Arctic are summarized in figure 3.

# d. Ship Ice Routes

As in previous years, ship ice routing service was provided from NAVOCEANO and the field station in Argentia. Routings were prepared for ships from the continental United States (CONUS) to Arctic ports and return and for intra-Arctic operations. Within the Arctic, routes terminated where icebreaker escort was provided.

Routes above 45°N included areas of significant sea ice and iceberg concentrations, whereas routes south of 45°N were primarily affected by weather.

The ice forecaster monitored all routed ships and recommended necessary route changes. The ships in turn transmitted daily situation reports (SITREPS) to the ice forecast facility.

From 6 May to 13 November, NAVOCEANO and Argentia issued a total of 114 ship ice routes.

# e. Special Briefings

At various times during the operation of the Argentia Ice Forecast Facility, special briefings on Arctic ice conditions were given to personnel of the Argentia Coast Guard Air Detachment, to the Commanding Officer of the USCGC EVERGREEN, and to the Naval Weather Service.

#### 3. Ice Reconnaissance

Aerial ice reconnaissance during the 1963 resupply season was provided primarily by SP2E aircraft patrol squadrons stationed at Argentia and Keflavik. These aircraft conducted long-range ice reconnaissance of the eastern Arctic.

Immediate tactical support was provided by icebreaker-based helicopters which made local ice observations. Ice reconnaissance on initial and terminal legs of BIRDS EYE flights supplemented the ice data gathered on SP2E flights.

Figure 4 shows the numbers of hours flown and numbers of flights made over each eastern sector during each month of 1963 as well as the monthly and annual totals. Figure 4 includes data gathered by the U.S. Coast Guard flights as well as those portions of the Canadian reconnaissance flown over the U.S. operational areas. Not included in figure 4 is a large portion

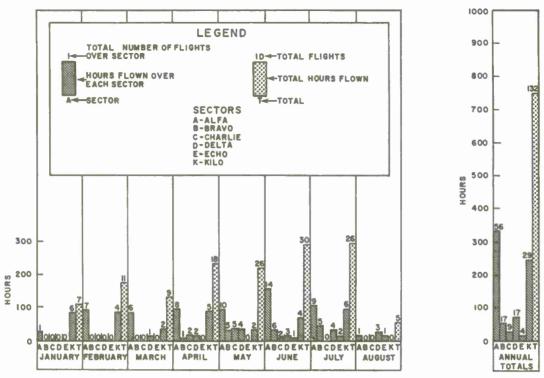


FIGURE 4 SUMMARY OF 1963 AERIAL ICE RECONNAISSANCE, EASTERN ARCTIC

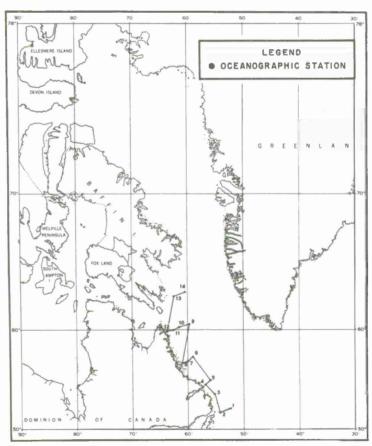


FIGURE 5 OCEANOGRAPHIC STATIONS TAKEN BY USS ATKA (AGB-3), EASTERN ARCTIC, MAY-JUNE 1963

of the reconnaissance over sector KTLO that was conducted by Danish flights. Although Danish flights were not specifically scheduled for MSTS support, they yielded much useful data.

#### 4. Communications

In addition to the MSTS leased voice and facsimile Arctic network, the communications system also included Navy and Air Force facsimile and radioteletype facilities.

Facsimile ice charts were transmitted from the ice forecast facility to ships and intra-Arctic ports via Goose Bay and Frobisher Bay radio, whereas word messages were transmitted to CONUS and ships by the Navy Communications Center at Argentia.

Ships experienced some difficulty in receiving good facsimile charts both from Goose Bay and Frobisher Bay.

# 5. Supporting Projects

# a. Oceanography

During May and June the USS ATKA occupied 14 oceanographic stations in the Labrador Sea before severe hull damage forced her to retire. The USS EDISTO occupied 103 stations in the Norwegian Sea during July and August. The Canadian icebreaker LABRADOR occupied 131 oceanographic stations in Baffin Bay, Davis Strait, and the Labrador Sea during September and October. These data were used to compute initial ice formation dates and ice thickness estimates for the 1964 Long-Range Outlook. Stations occupied by United States and Canadian ships are presented in figures 5 through 7.

# b. SUBICEX 1-63

From 4 to 17 March, NAVOCEANO provided forecasting support to COMSUEDIV 102 which was operating in the vicinity of Cabot Strait. In addition to a 15-day outlook, seven 48-hour forecasts were prepared for this exercise.

# c. USCGC EVERGREEN

Ice forecasting support was provided for the EVERGREEN'S survey of the Ward Hunt Ice Island in Kennedy Channel. From 27 July until 10 August, four 5-day forecasts were prepared at NAVOCEANO for the EVERGREEN. The ice island was located at 80°55'N,67°W on 12 July. The island became dislodged and broke up on 24 July.

# d. Project BIRDS EYE

As part of the continuing program of data collection for research and development of ice forecasting techniques, eight BIRDS EYE flights covering

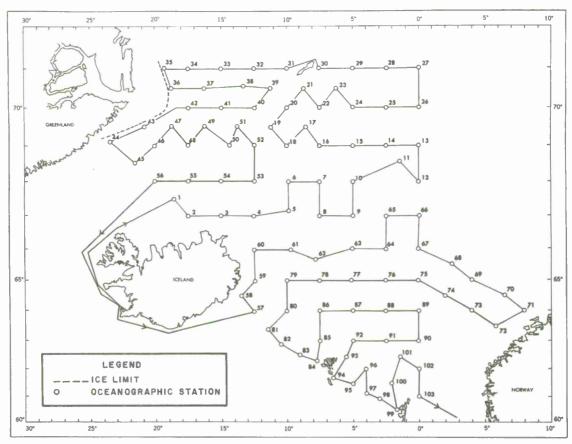


FIGURE 6 OCEANOGRAPHIC STATIONS TAKEN BY USS EDISTO (AGB-2), EASTERN ARCTIC, JULY-AUGUST 1963

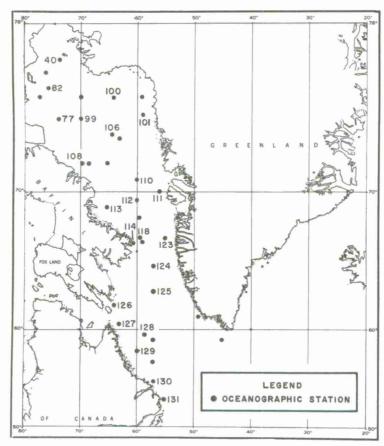


FIGURE 7 OCEANOGRAPHIC STATIONS TAKEN BY CCGC LABRADOR, SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1963

a total of 699 hours were conducted primarily over the polar basin during 1963. A summary of BIRDS EYE aerial reconnaissance is shown in figure 8. Data collected on each BIRDS EYE flight are published as special informal reports.

# 6. Observed Ice Conditions

Ice conditions observed in the eastern North American Arctic are shown in appendix A. The ice data, presented over 6-day periods, were obtained primarily from U.S. aerial ice reconnaissance supplemented by Canadian and Danish reconnaissance. Danish ice reconnaissance charts are presented in appendix B.

The outstanding feature of the ice season was the Ward Hunt Ice Island lodged in Kennedy Channel until late July. The island was first observed in northern Kennedy Channel on 25 February during a BIRDS EYE flight. It subsequently became lodged between Hans and Ellesmere Islands and was closely observed until breakup on 24 July. The ice island acted as a block and resulted in consolidated ice to the north and anomalous open water to ice-free conditions in Kane Basin during most of the season.

Near normal ice conditions existed over most of the eastern Arctic except for Goose Bay. Less than eight-tenths concentration occurred in the Goose Bay approaches about 23 June or about two weeks later than normal. Unescorted entry occurred about 10 days later than normal. Forecast and observed opening dates are shown in table 1.

	Or	pening Dates		
	* Escori	ted	**Unescor	ted
Station	1963 Outlook	Observed	1963 Outlook	Observed
Goose Bay	25 June	23 June	10 July	6 July
Thule	30 June	10 July	15 July	23 July
Kulusuk	20 <b>July</b>	16 July	15 August	15 August
Sondrestrom	25 May	20 May	1 June	8 June
Itivdleq	1 May Pric	or 1 May	5 May Prio	r 1 June

<sup>\* &</sup>lt;8/10 concentration

Table 1 Long-Range Ice Outlook Verification 1963

<sup>\*\* &</sup>lt;1/10 concentration

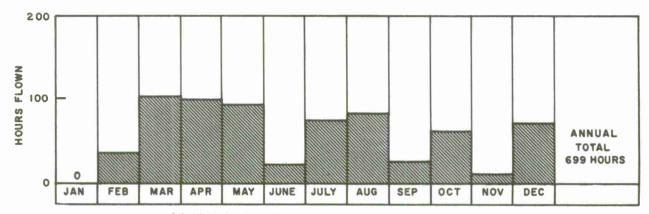


FIGURE 8 SUMMARY OF 1963 BIRDSEYE AERIAL ICE RECONNAISSANCE

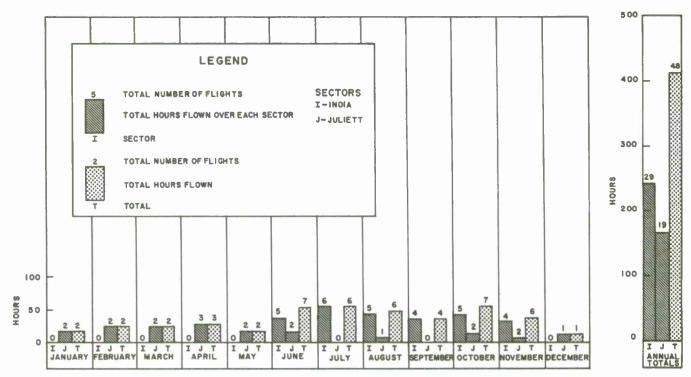


FIGURE 9 SUMMARY OF 1963 AERIAL ICE RECONNAISSANCE, WESTERN ARCTIC

#### PART II - WESTERN ARCTIC

#### 1. General

Resupply operations were conducted by U.S. and Canadian commercial shipping companies, therefore, ice forecasting and reconnaissance supported military and oceanographic operations.

# 2. Ice Forecasting

# a. Long-Range Outlook

No formal long-range outlook (SP-60 series) was published for the western Arctic in 1963. Only general long-range conditions were described during oral briefings for COMSTS and COMSTSLANT.

# b. Short- and Long-Range Ice Forecasts

Thirty-day ice forecasts for the north Alaskan coast and the Chukchi and Bering Seas were issued twice monthly to COMALSEAFRON throughout the year. The forecasts included pack boundaries, concentrations, and ice thickness for specified points. A total of twenty-four 30-day ice forecasts was issued.

Four 30-day and five 15-day forecasts were provided for the USCGC NORTHWIND and USS STATEN ISLAND cruises conducted during summer and autumn of 1963.

Beginning with the 1963 season, the Naval Weather Service assumed responsibility for short-range ice forecasting in the western Arctic. Fleet Weather Central, Kodiak, provided short-range ice forecasting and ship routing service in the western Arctic.

#### 3. Ice Reconnaissance

Aerial ice reconnaissance over sectors India and Juliett was conducted primarily by SP2E long-range aircraft under the command of COMALSEAFRON. These flights were conducted twice monthly throughout the year. In addition, monthly BIRDS EYE flights supplemented the long-range data. Short-range ice reconnaissance was conducted by ship-based helicopters.

A summary of hours flown and the number of flights made over each western sector for each month during 1963 as well as the monthly and annual totals is presented as figure 9.

#### 4. Communications

Because no local support was required for Alaskan resupply operations, communications consisted of existing U.S. Navy and Air Force circuits which were used to transmit all traffic between Washington and the western Arctic.

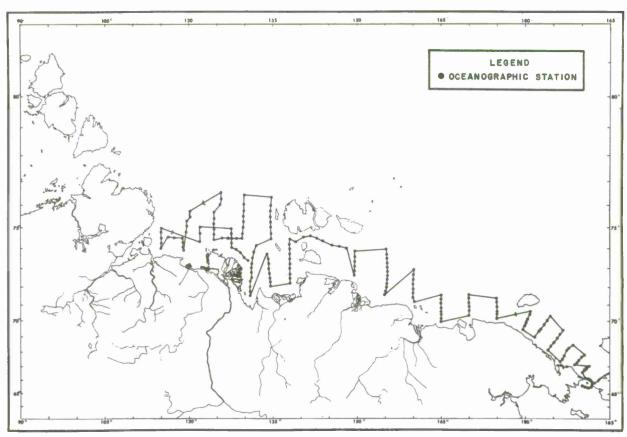


FIGURE 10 OCEANOGRAPHIC STATIONS TAKEN BY USCGC NORTHWIND (WAGB-282), WESTERN ARCTIC, AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1963

# 5. Supporting Projects

## a. USCGC NORTHWIND

From 9 August until 19 September the USCGC NORTHWIND conducted an oceanographic cruise along the north Siberian coast in the East Siberian and Laptev Seas. In addition to taking oceanographic stations, detailed observations and photographs of existing ice conditions were made. A NAVOCEANO oceanographer was aboard the NORTHWIND throughout the entire cruise. Figure 10 shows the locations of the stations occupied by the NORTHWIND. Ice conditions observed by the NORTHWIND during its cruise are included in appendix C.

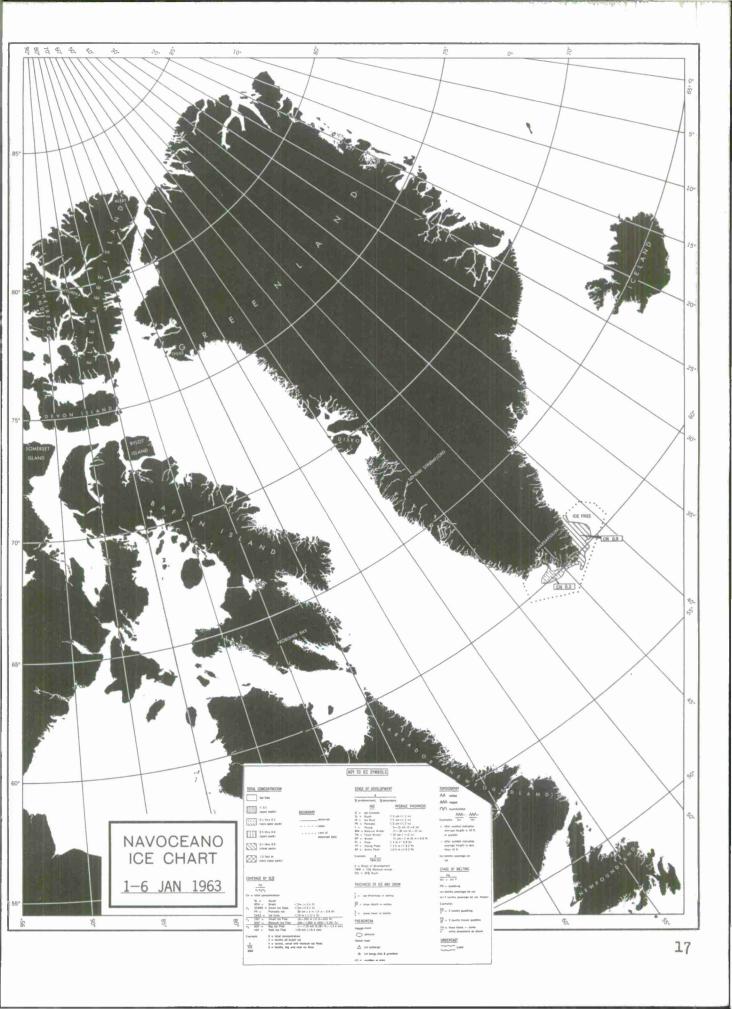
# b. USS STATEN ISLAND

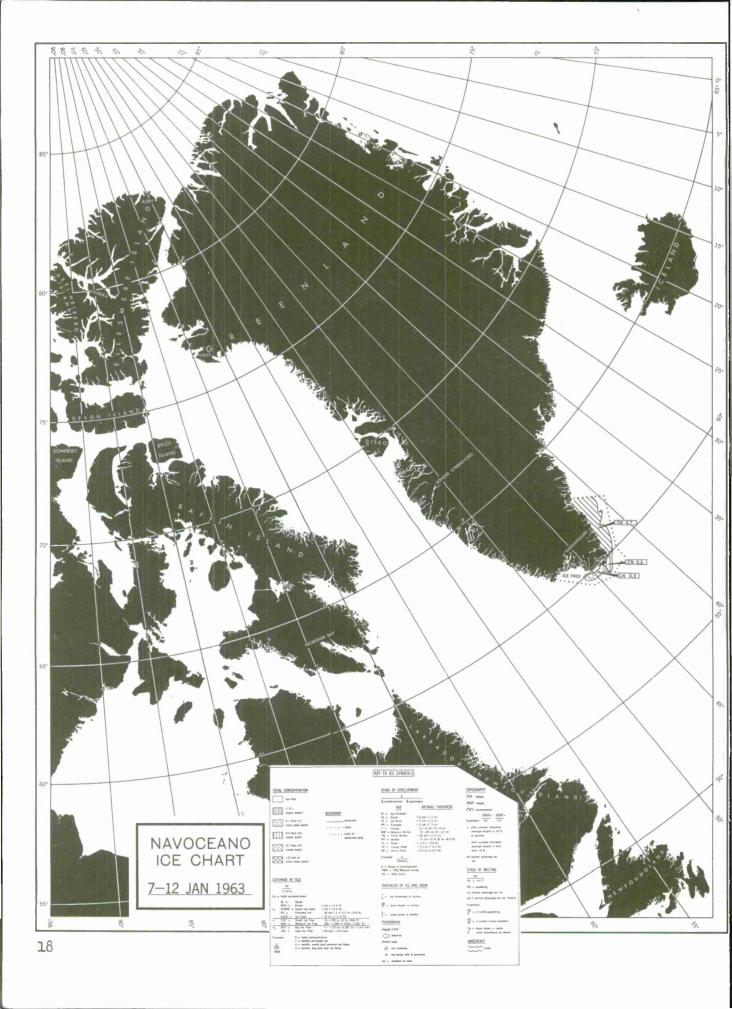
From 13 September to 22 November the USS STATEN ISLAND conducted a cruise in the Chukchi Sea. The oceanographic data obtained from these cruises are on file at the National Oceanographic Data Center, Washington, D.C.

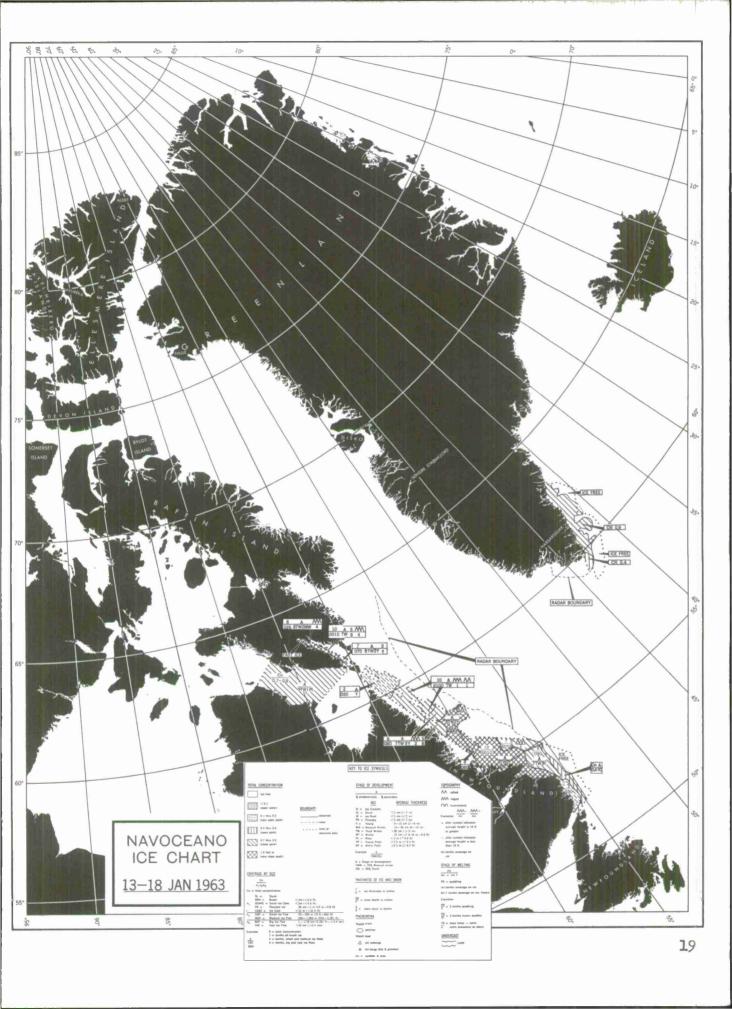
# 6. Observed Ice Conditions

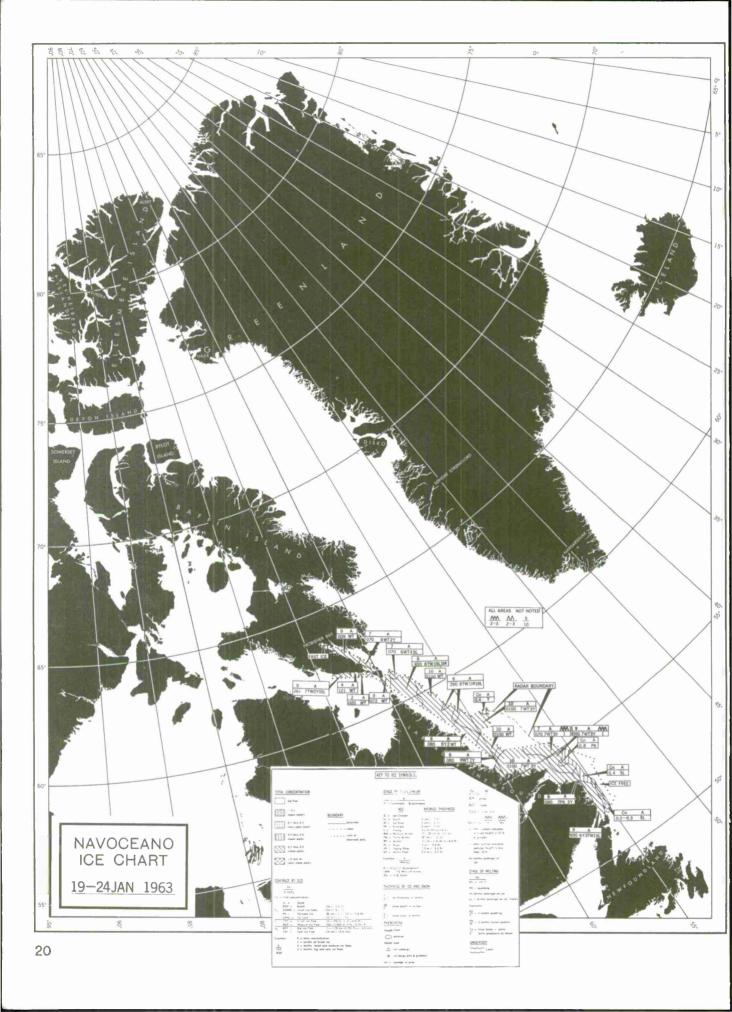
Ice conditions in the western North American Arctic are presented in appendix C.

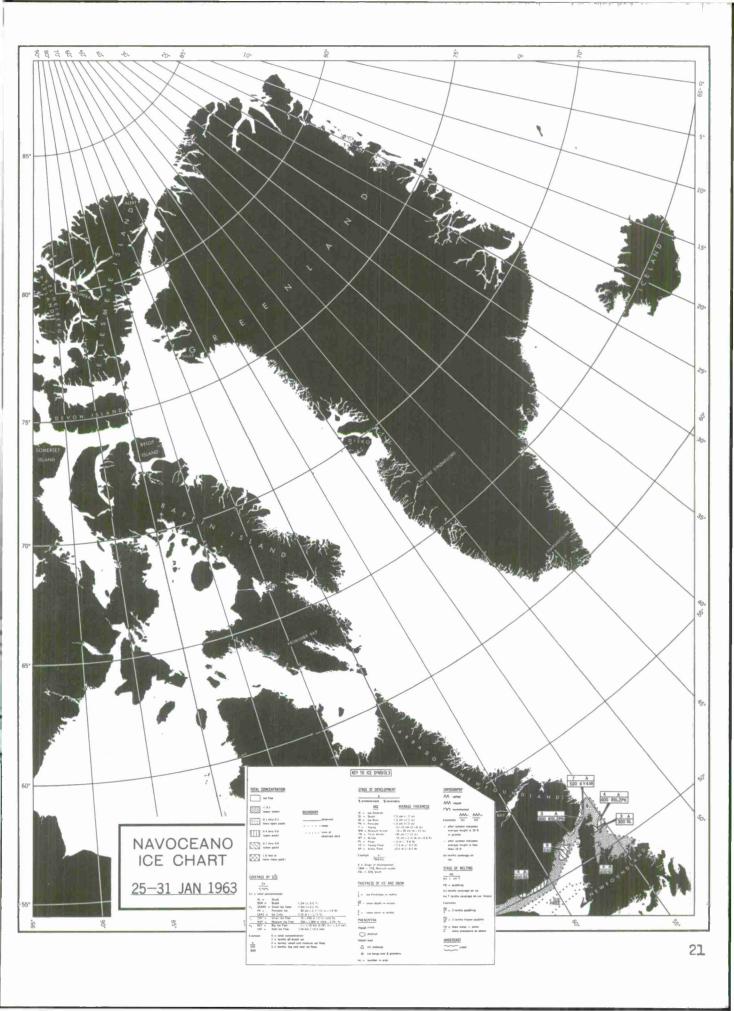
# APPENDIX A EASTERN ARCTIC ICE CHARTS

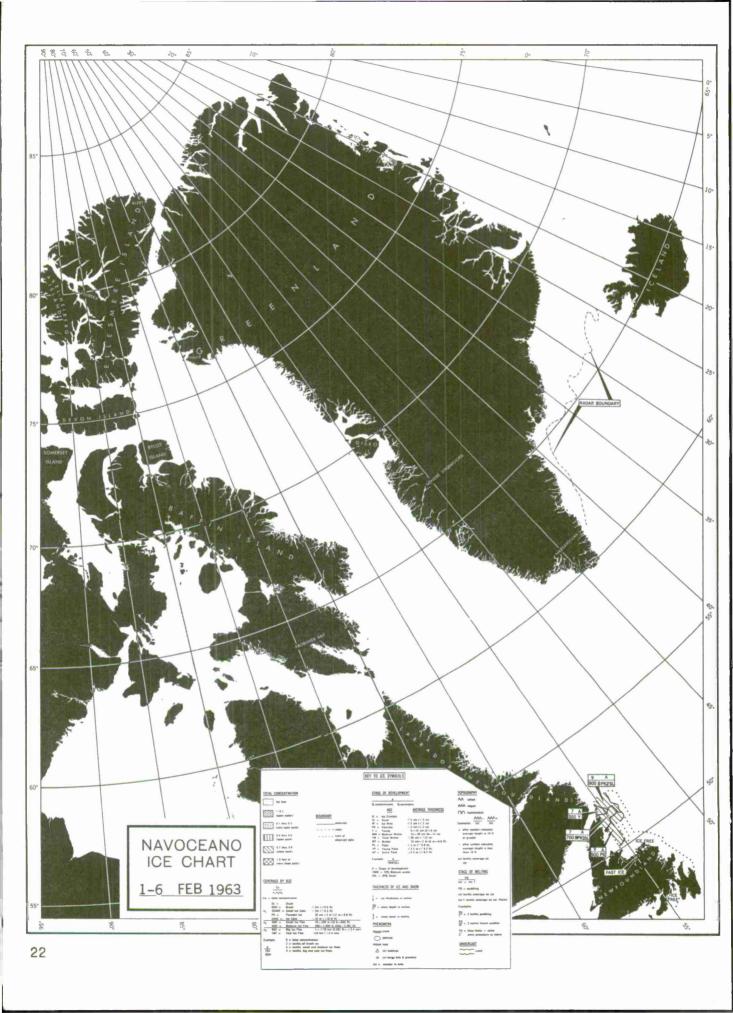


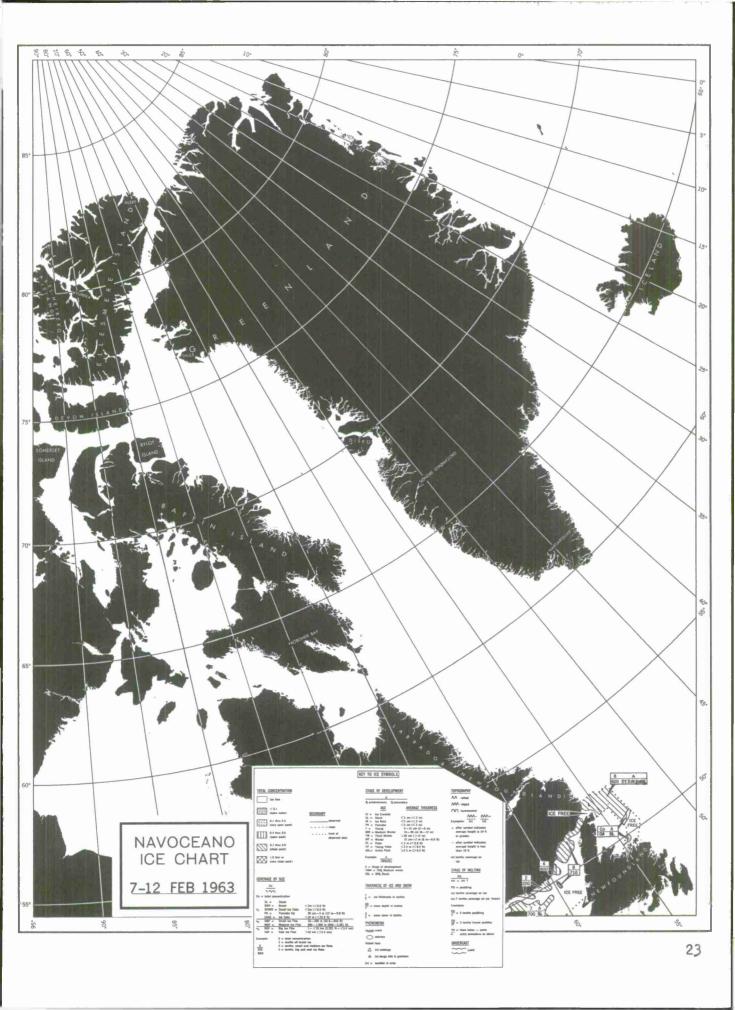


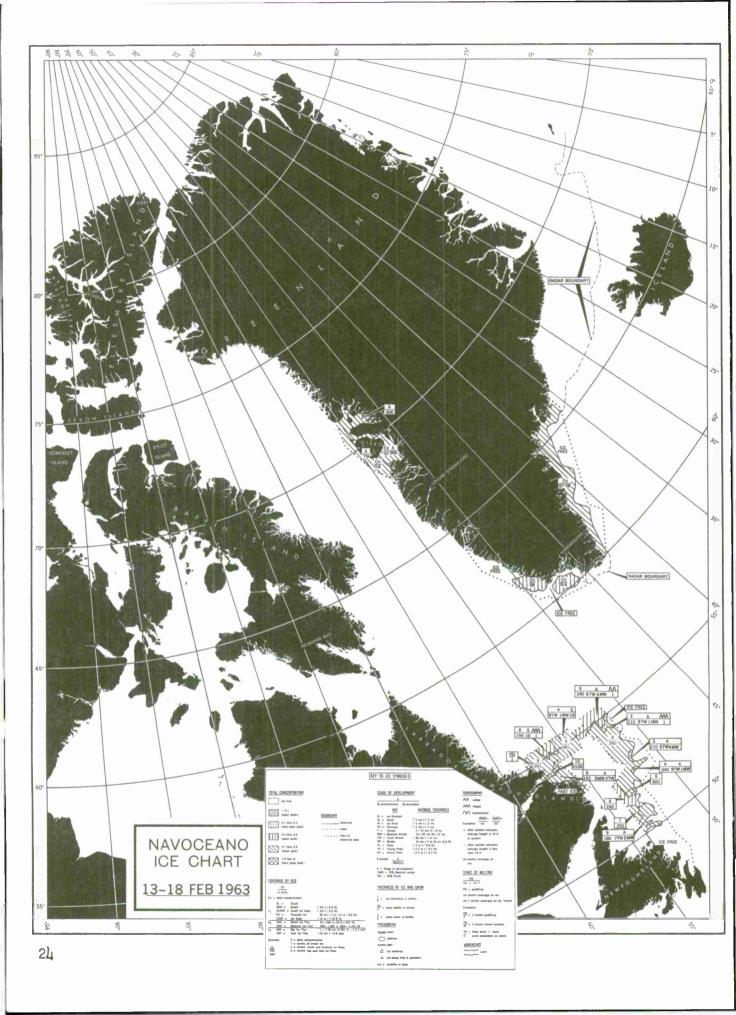


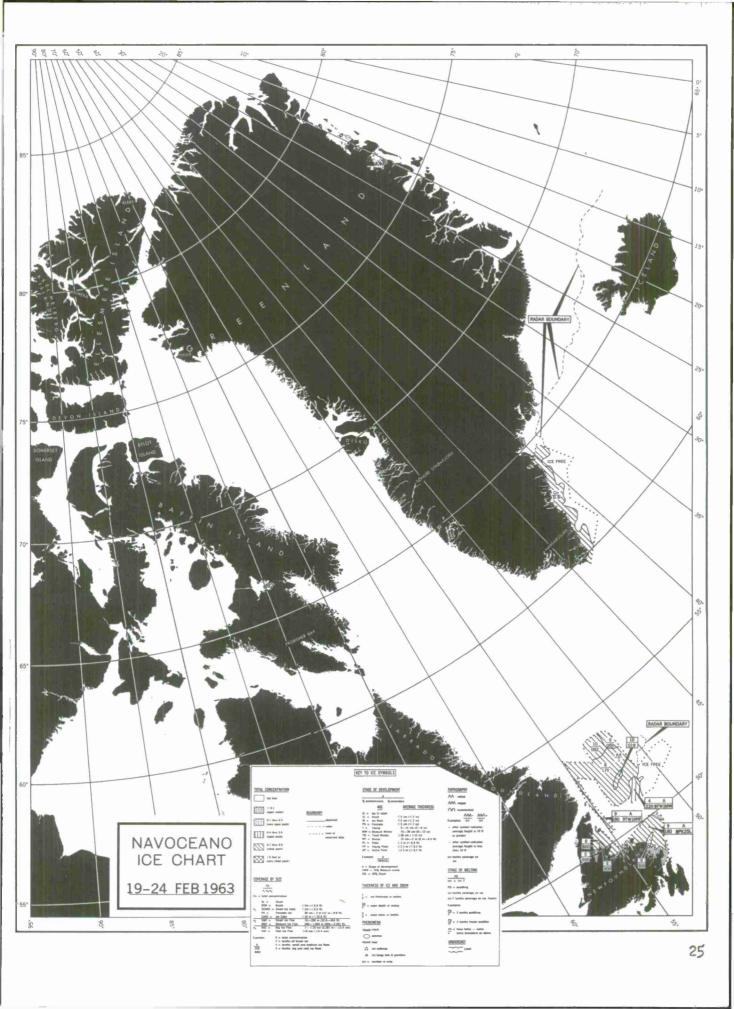


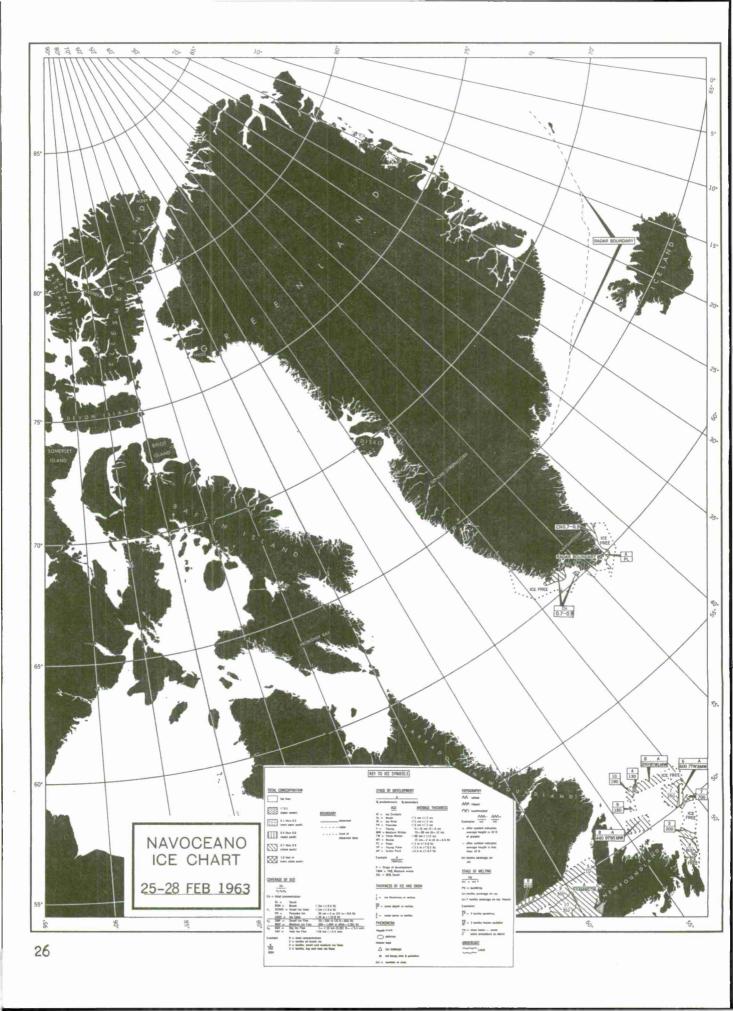


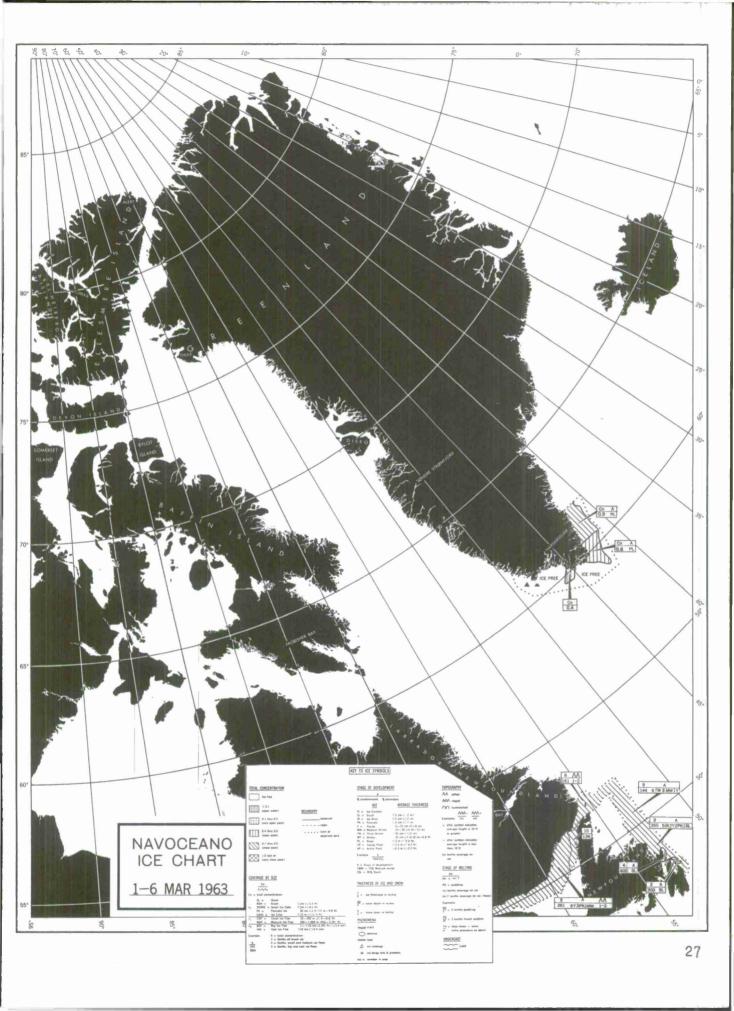


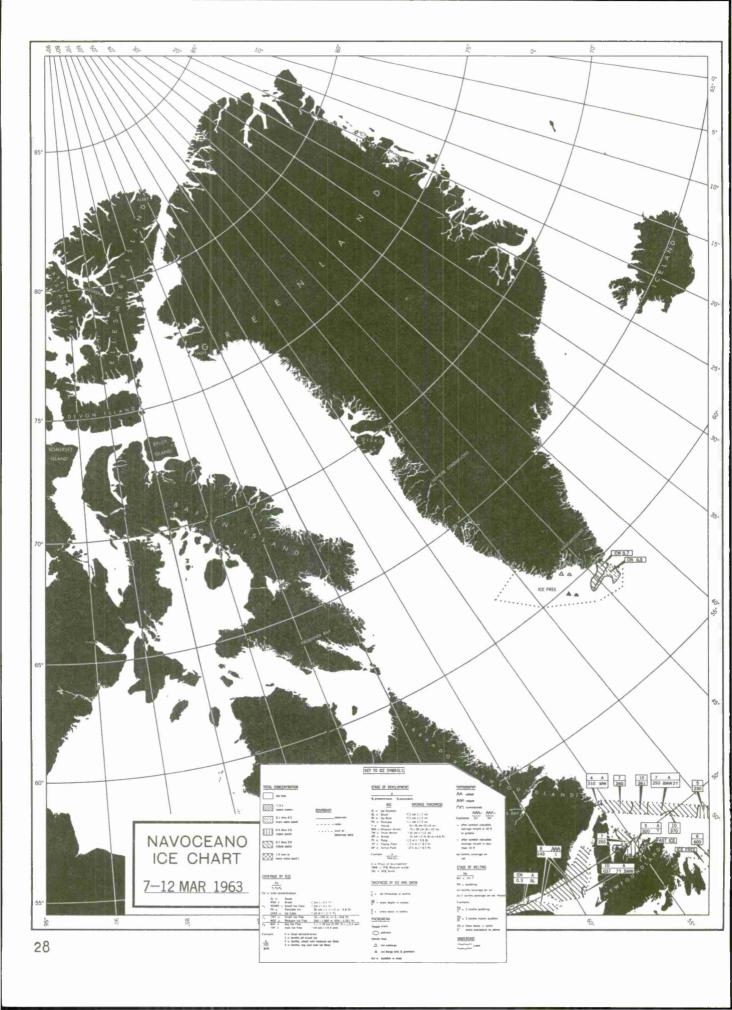


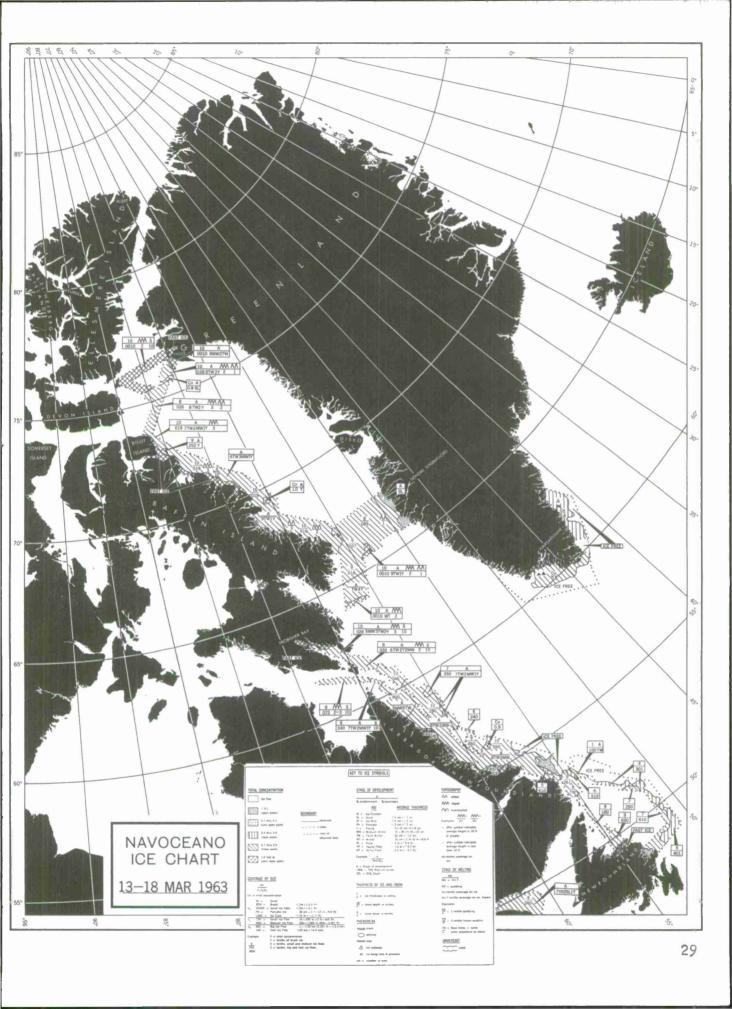


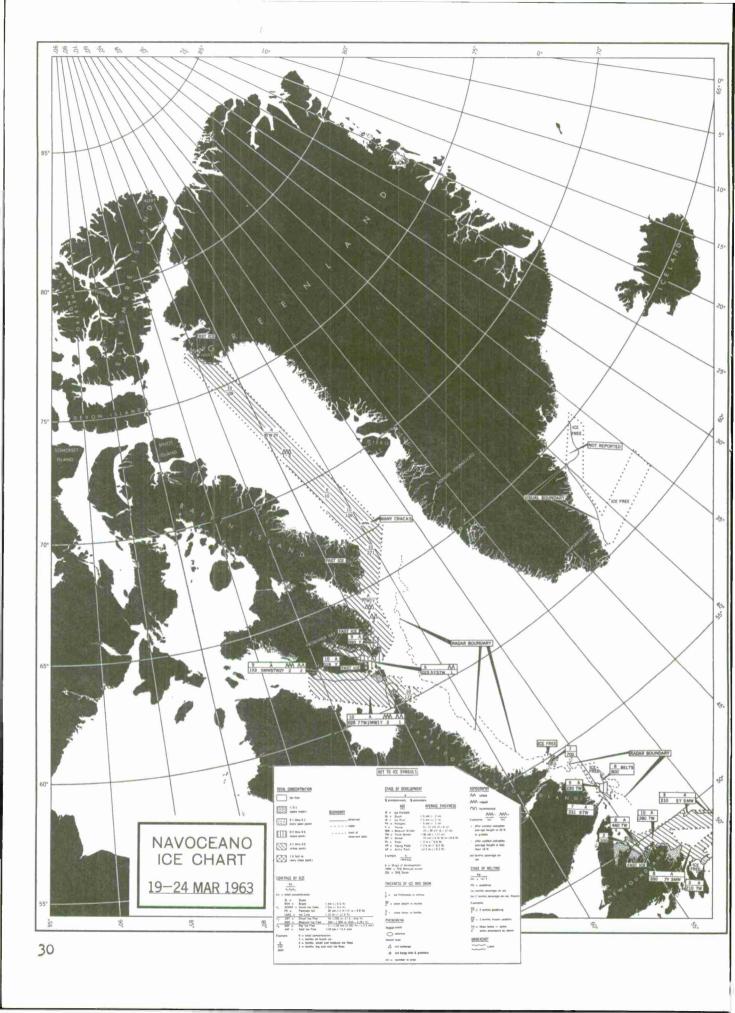


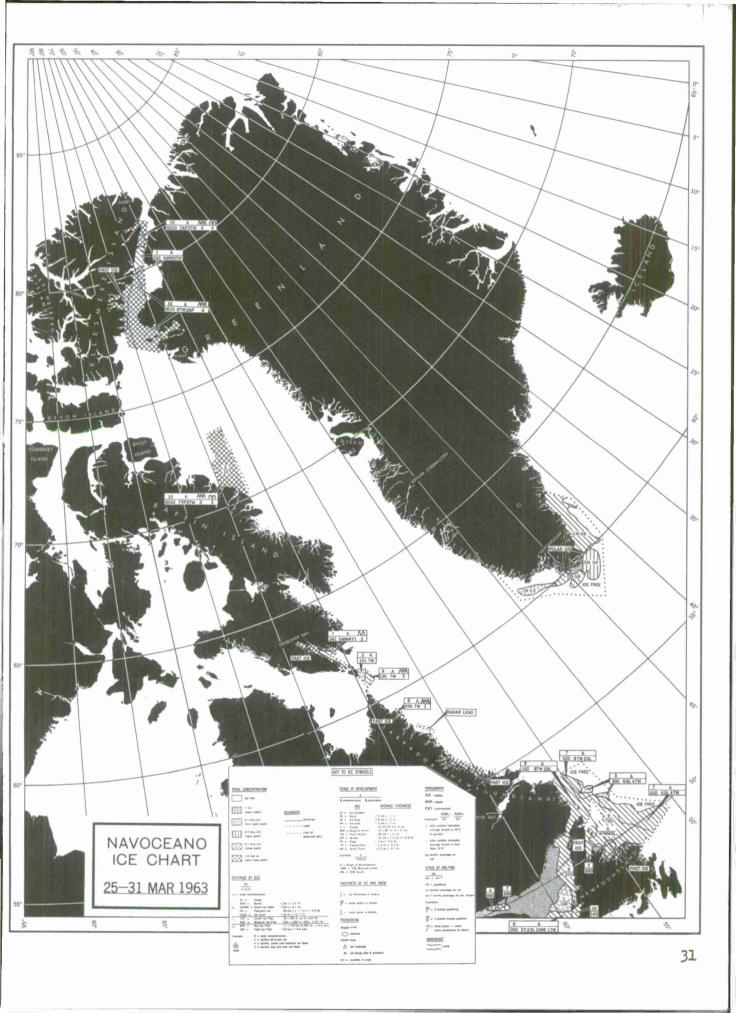


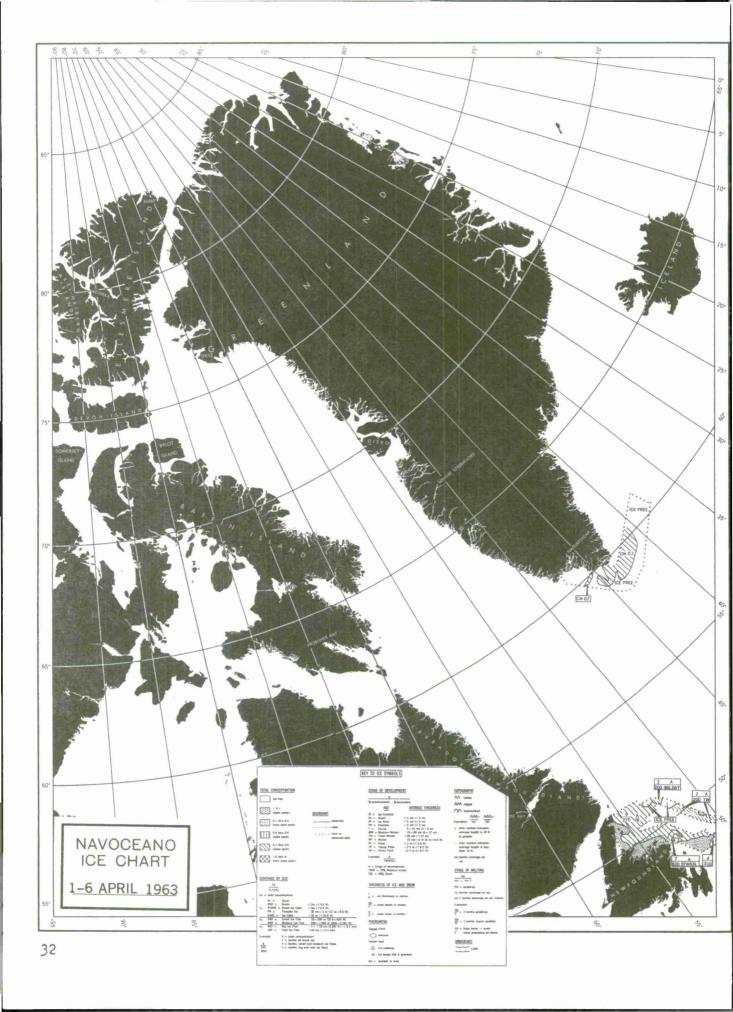


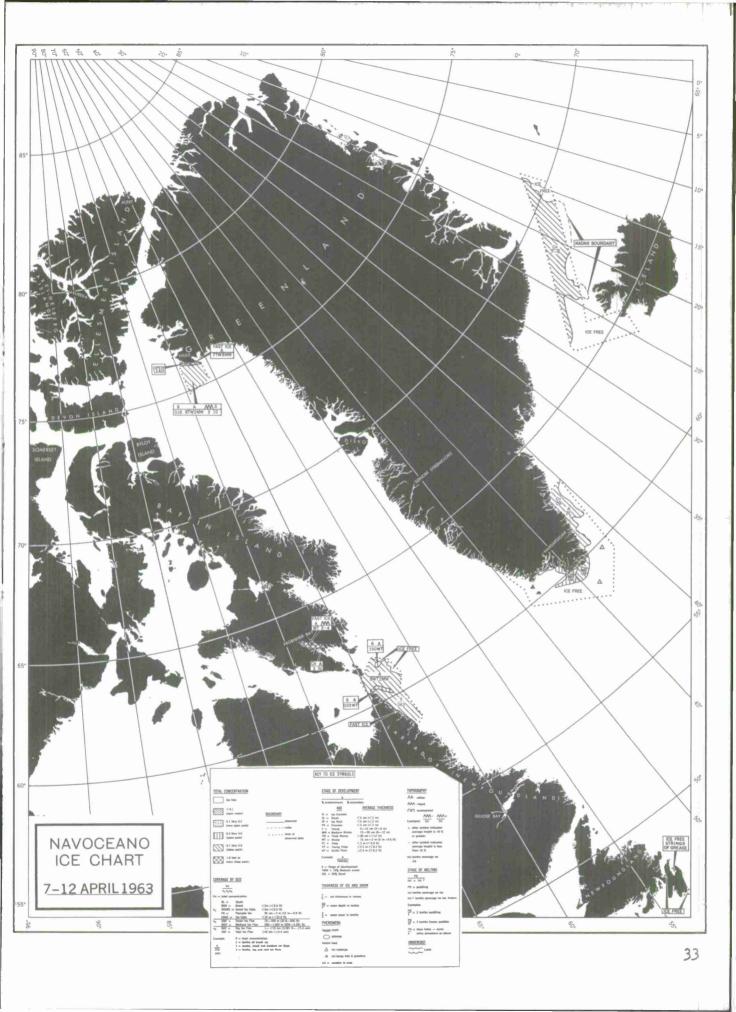


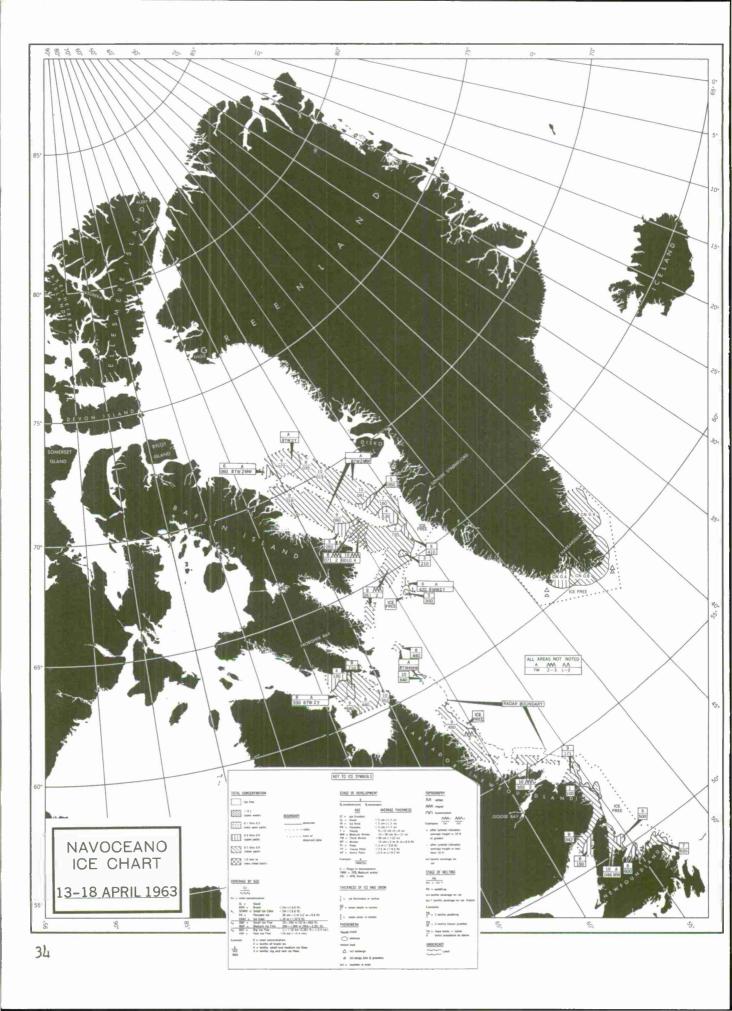


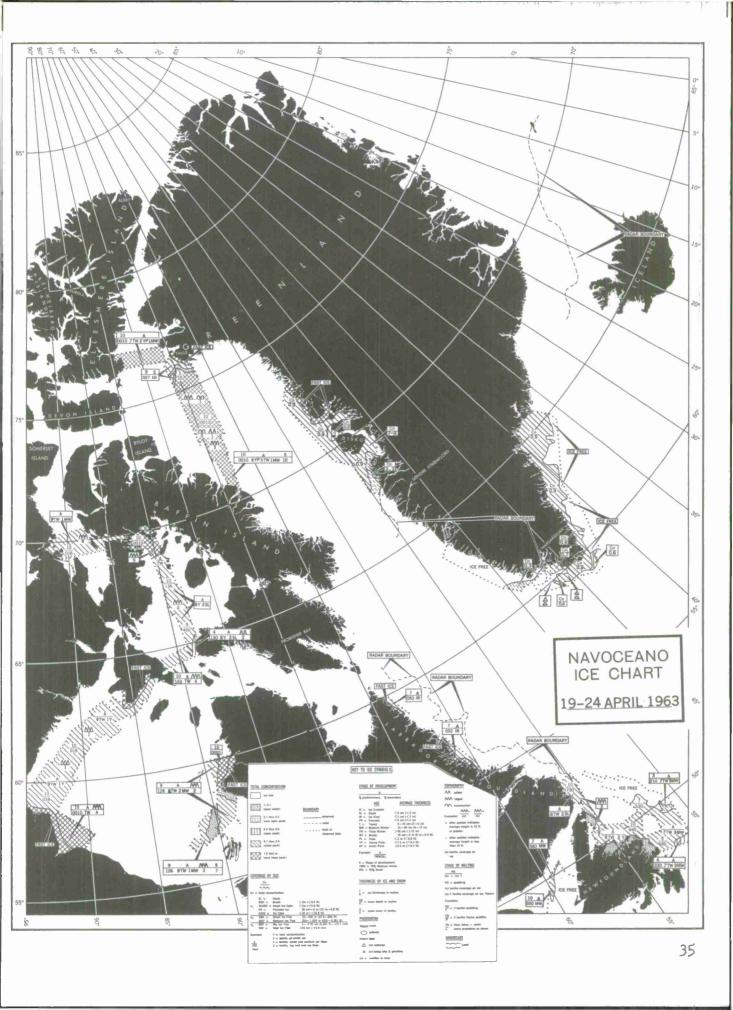


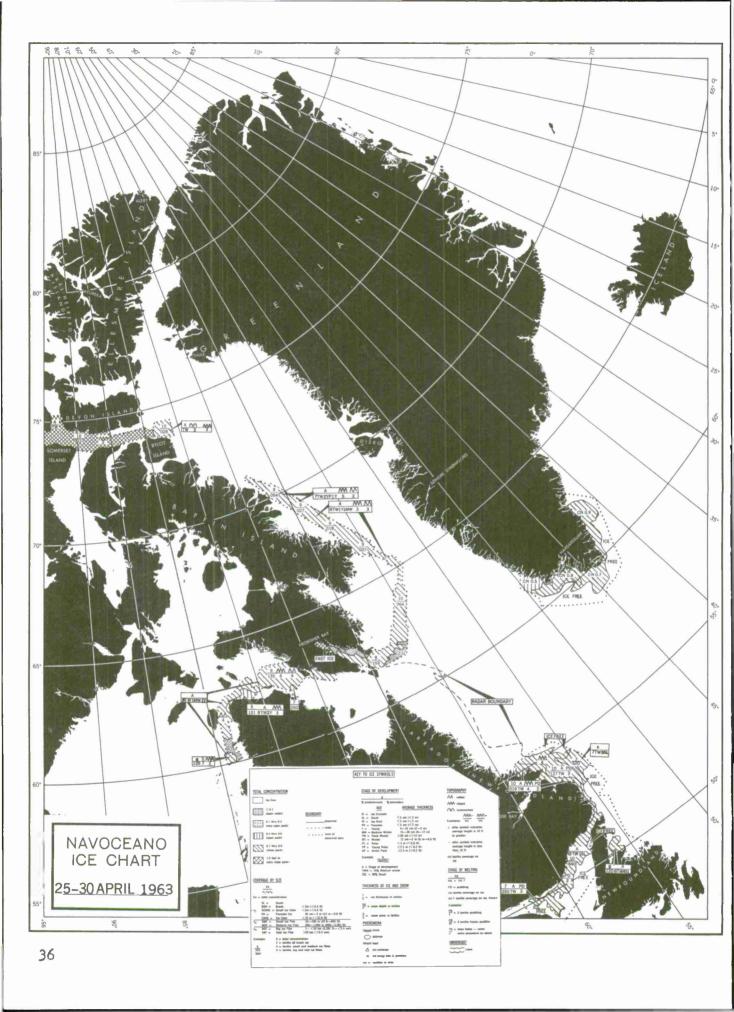


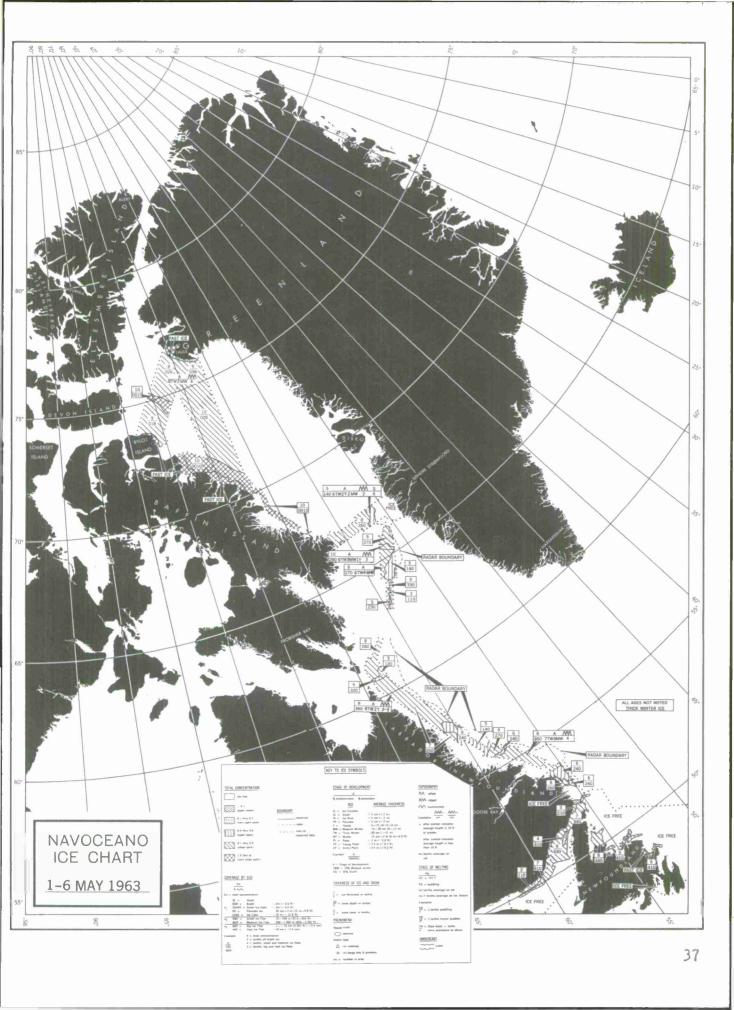


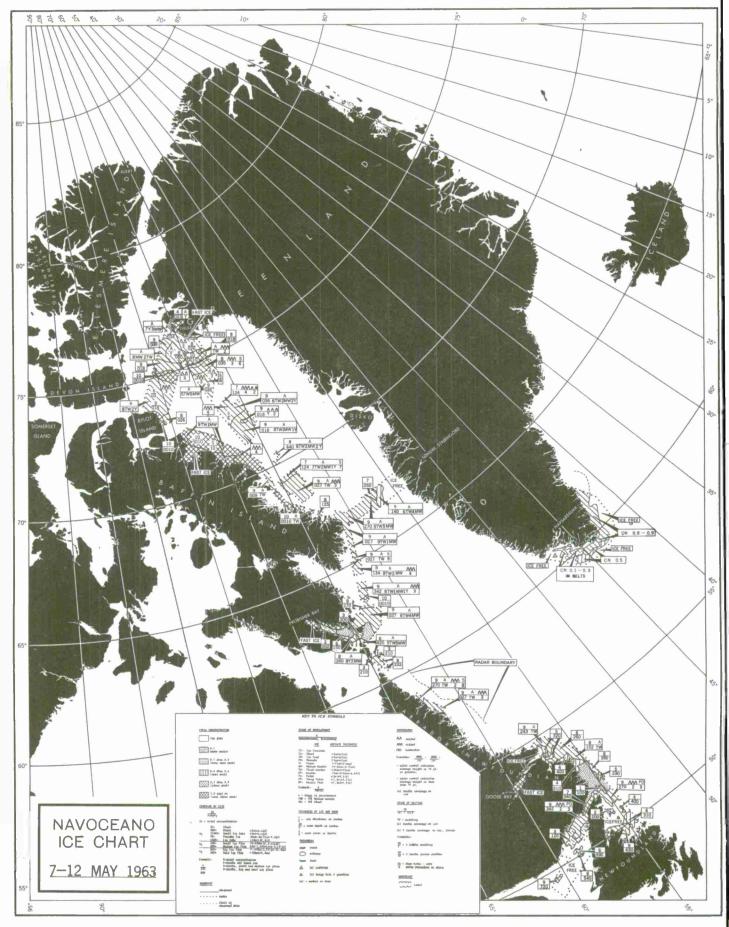


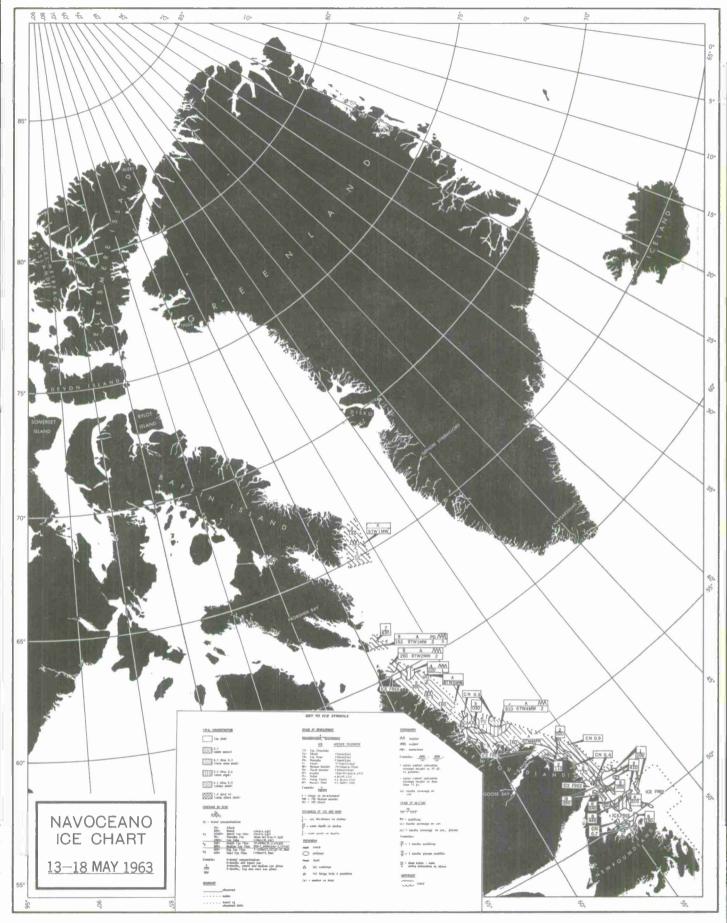


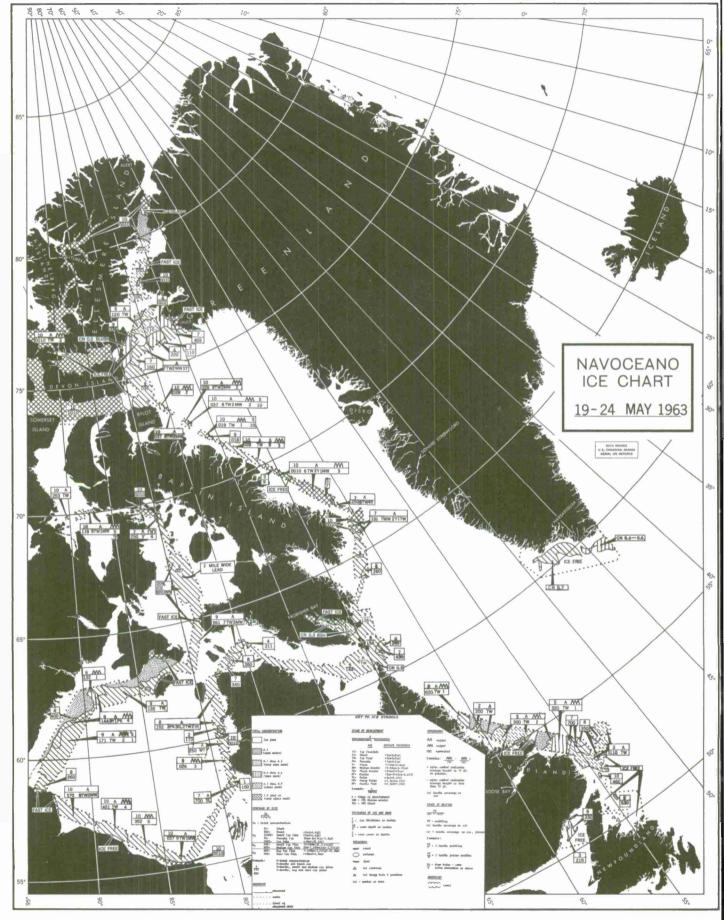


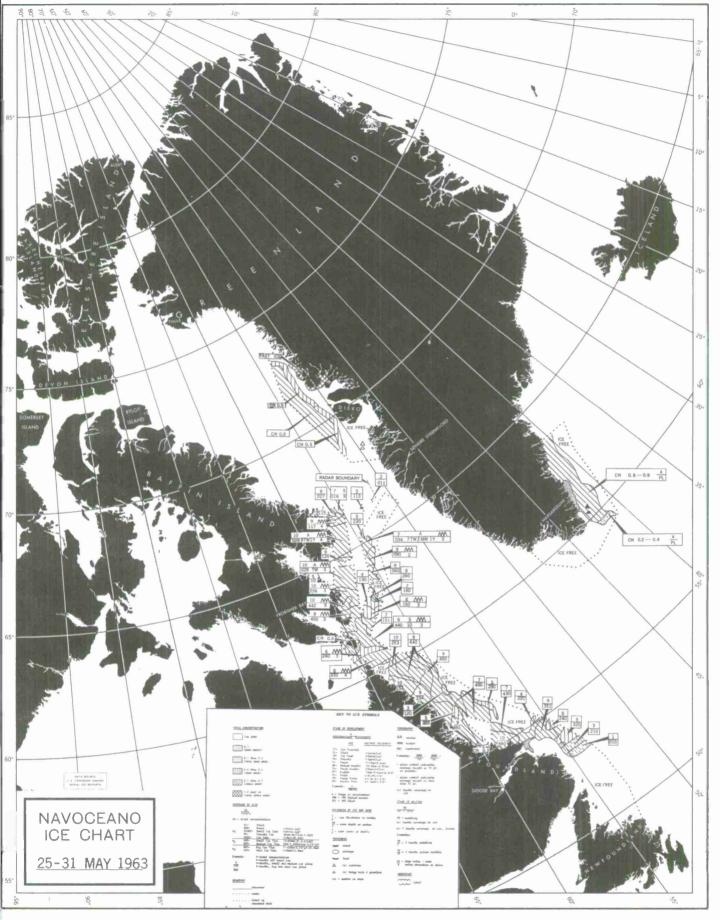


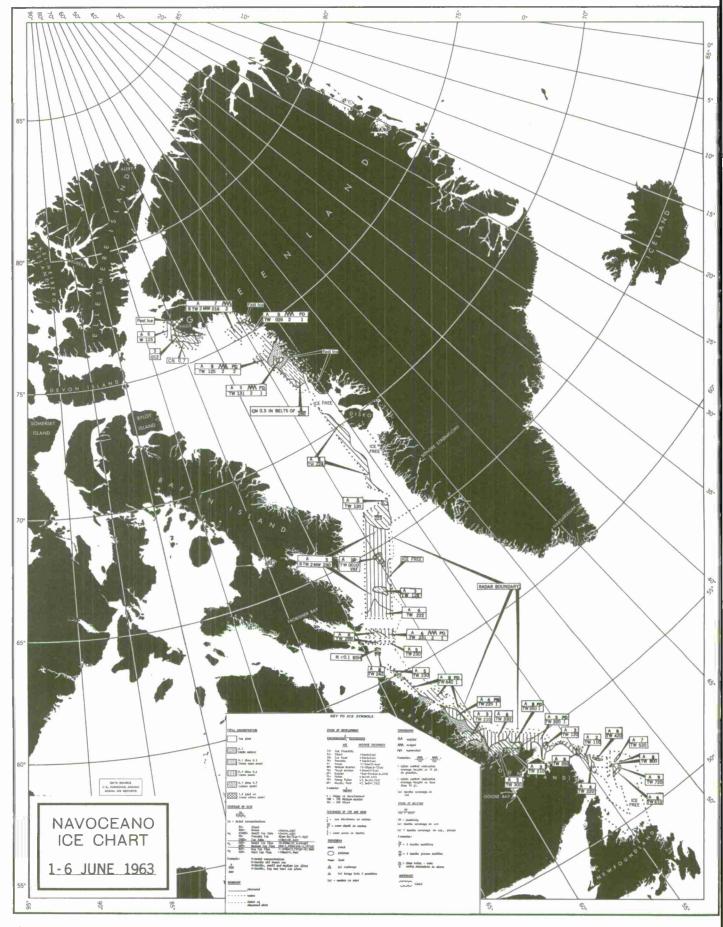


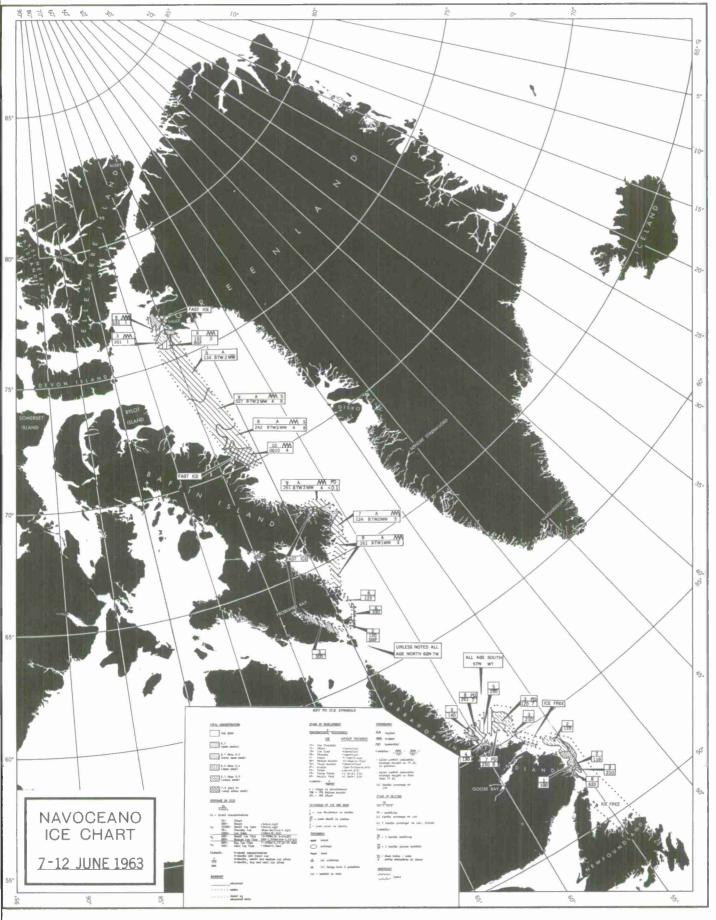


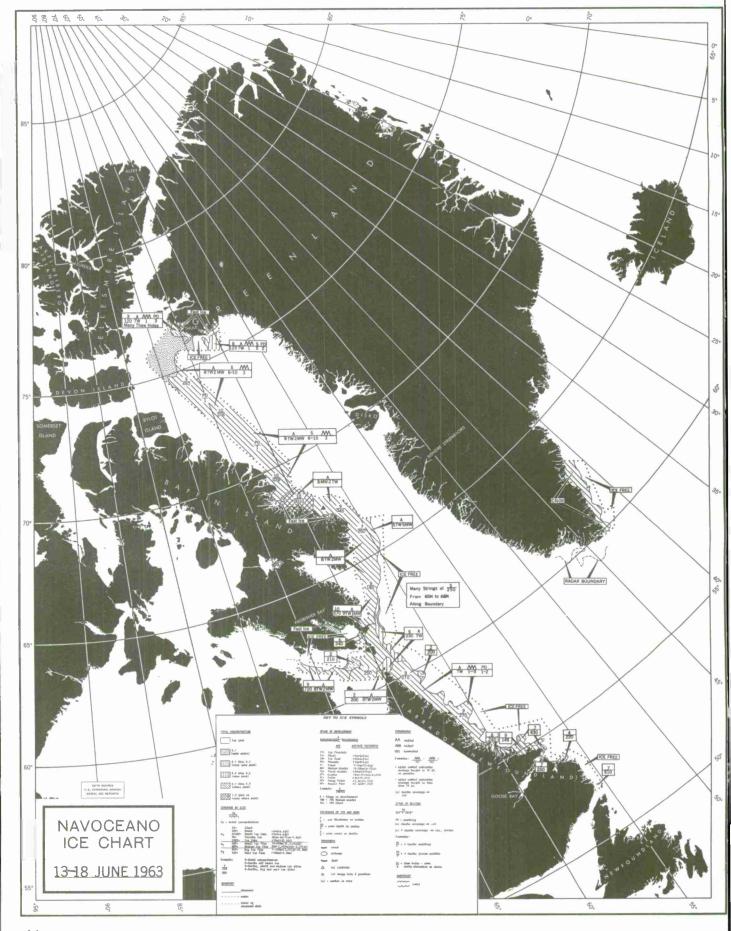


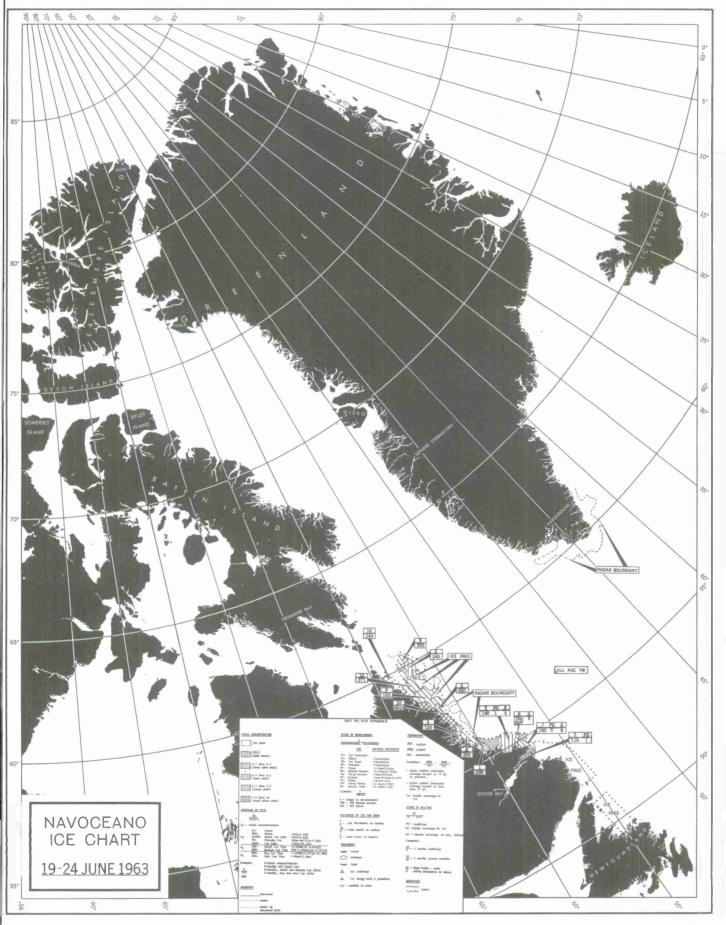


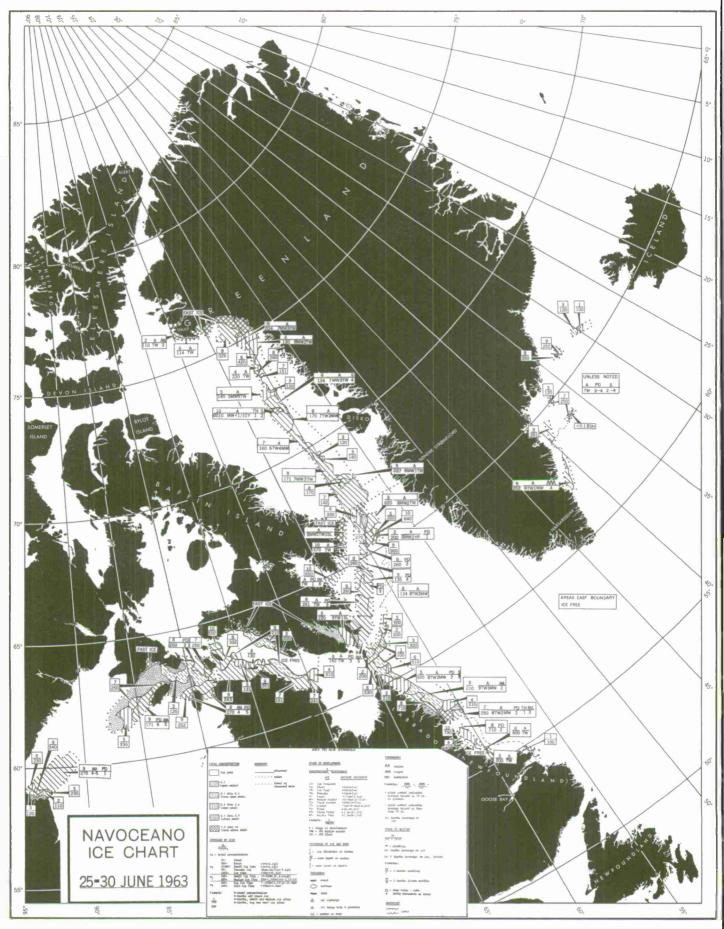


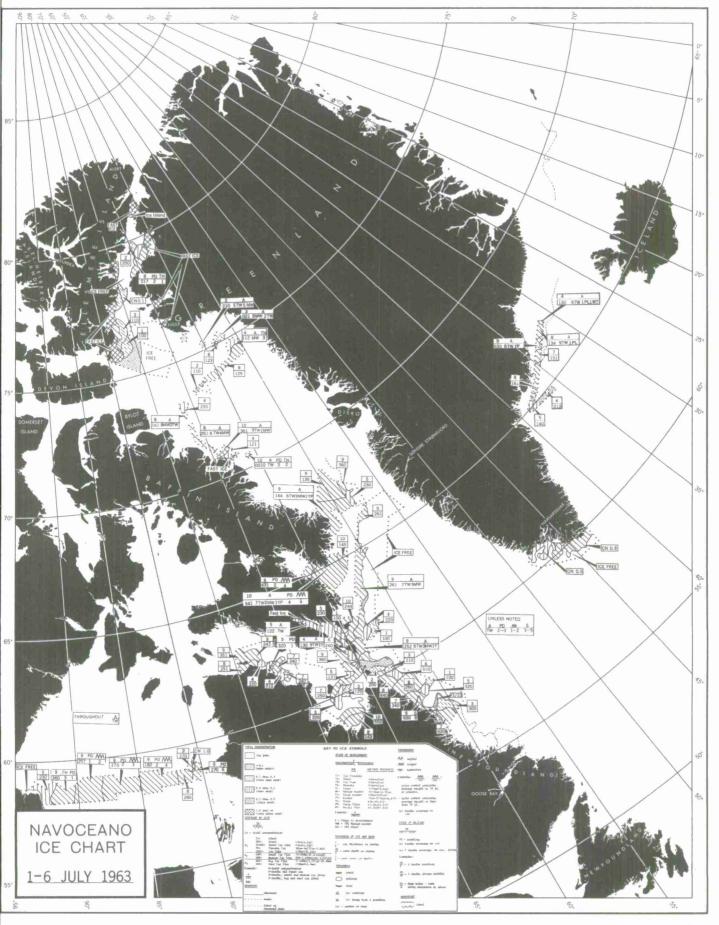


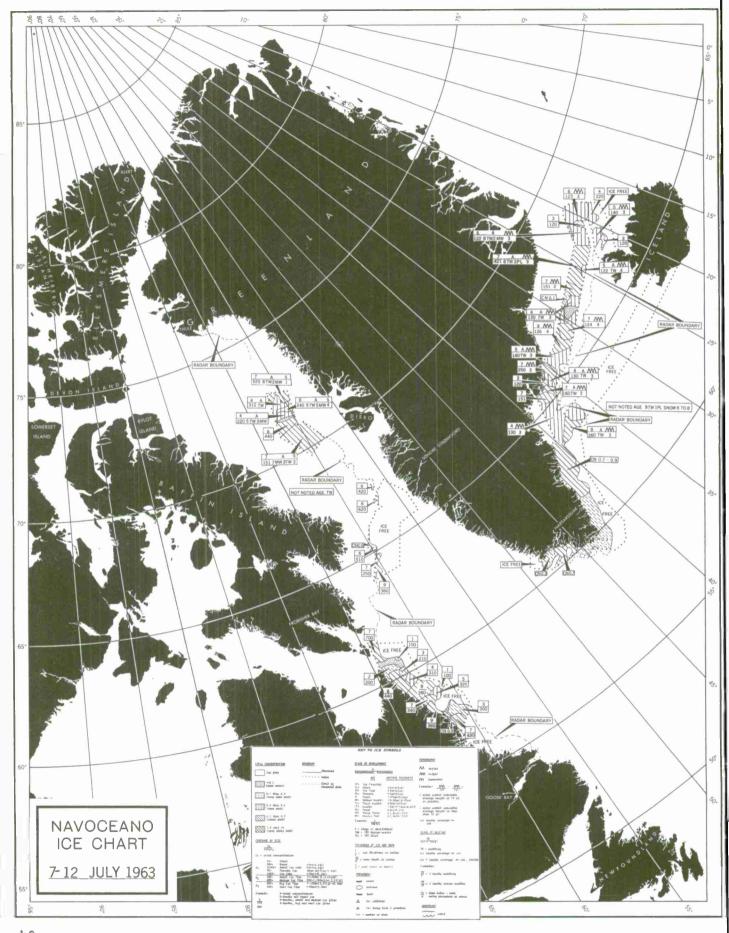


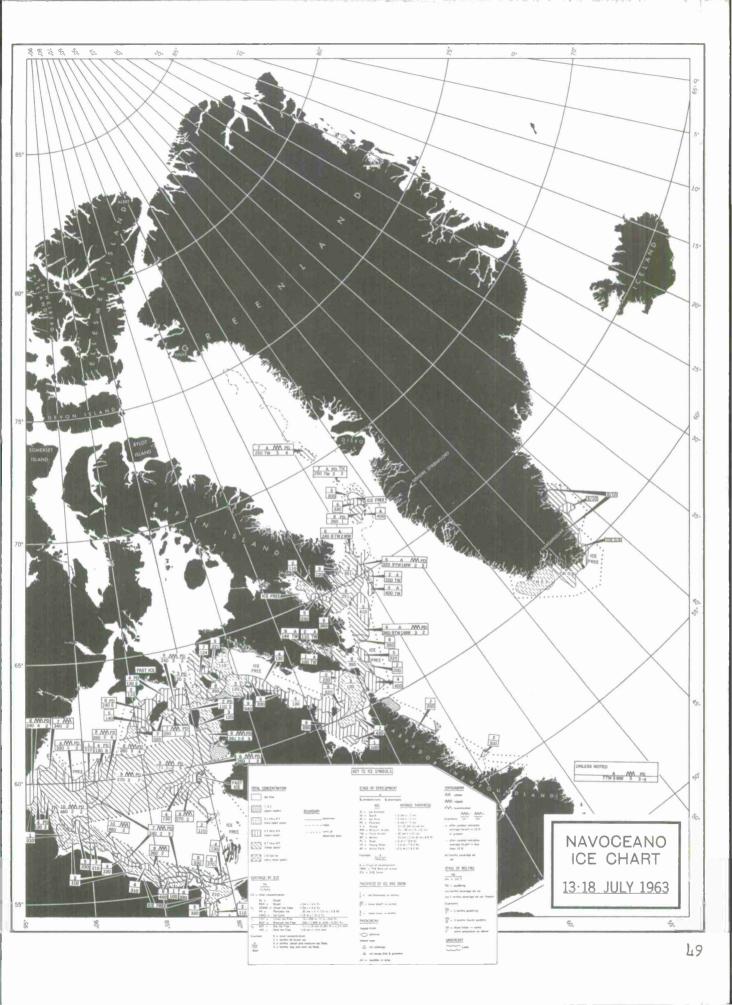


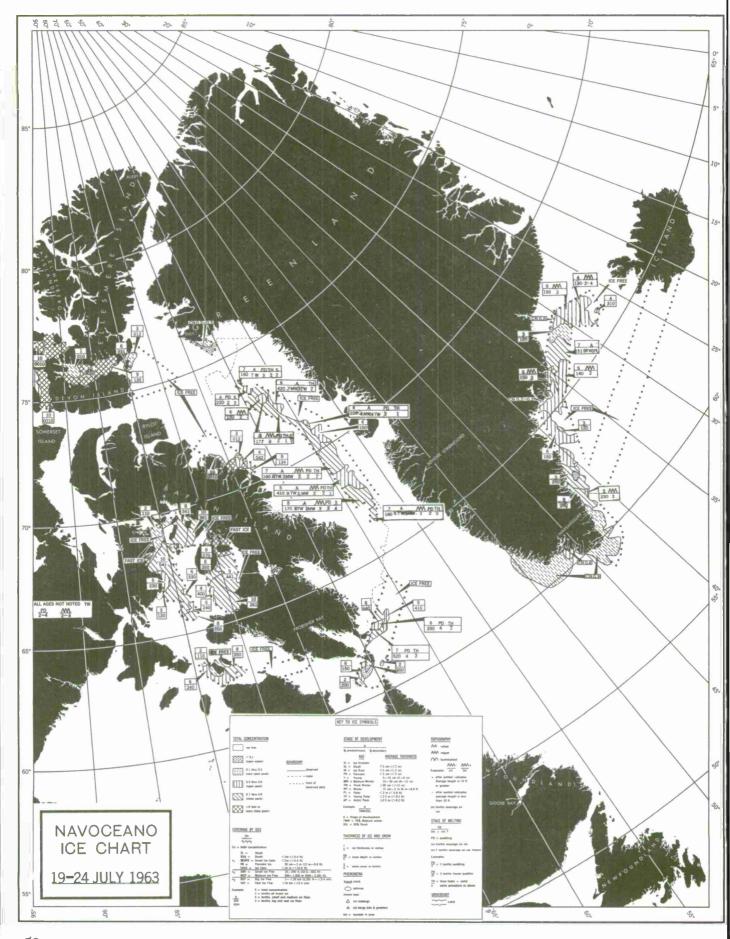


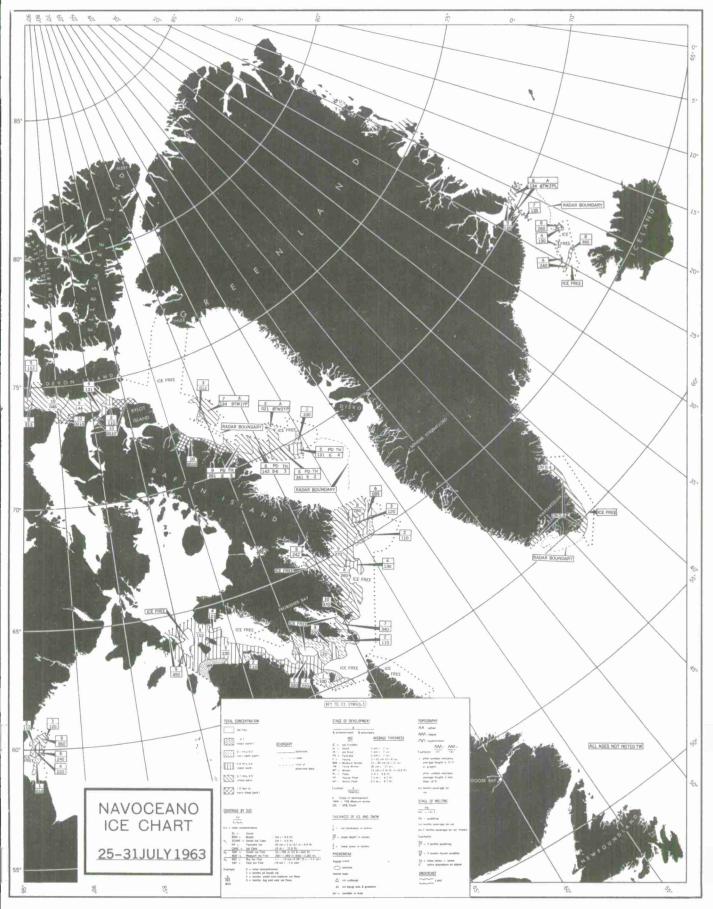


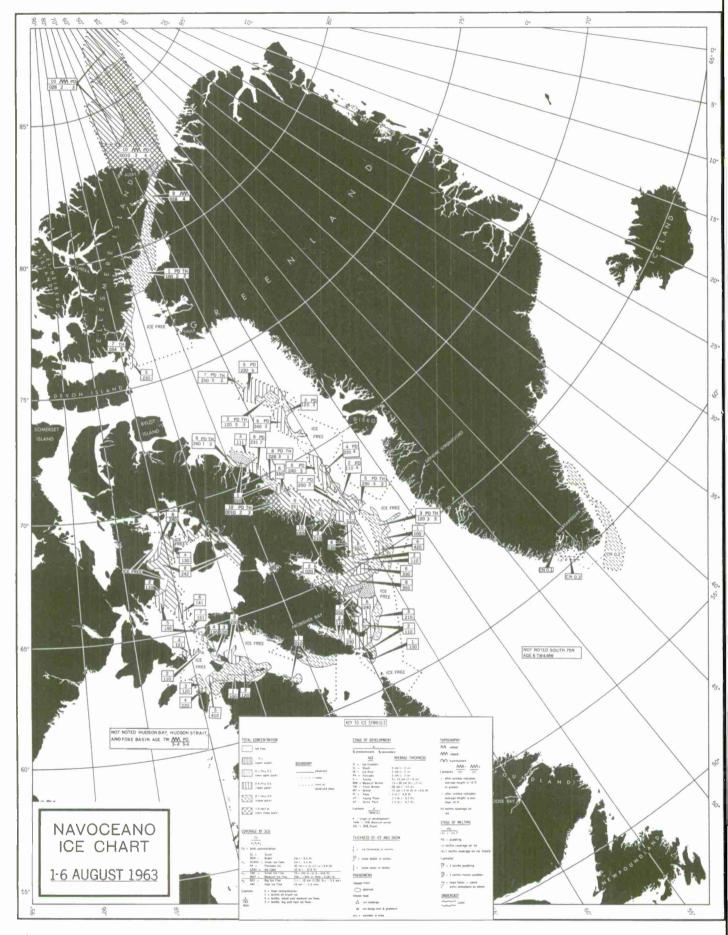


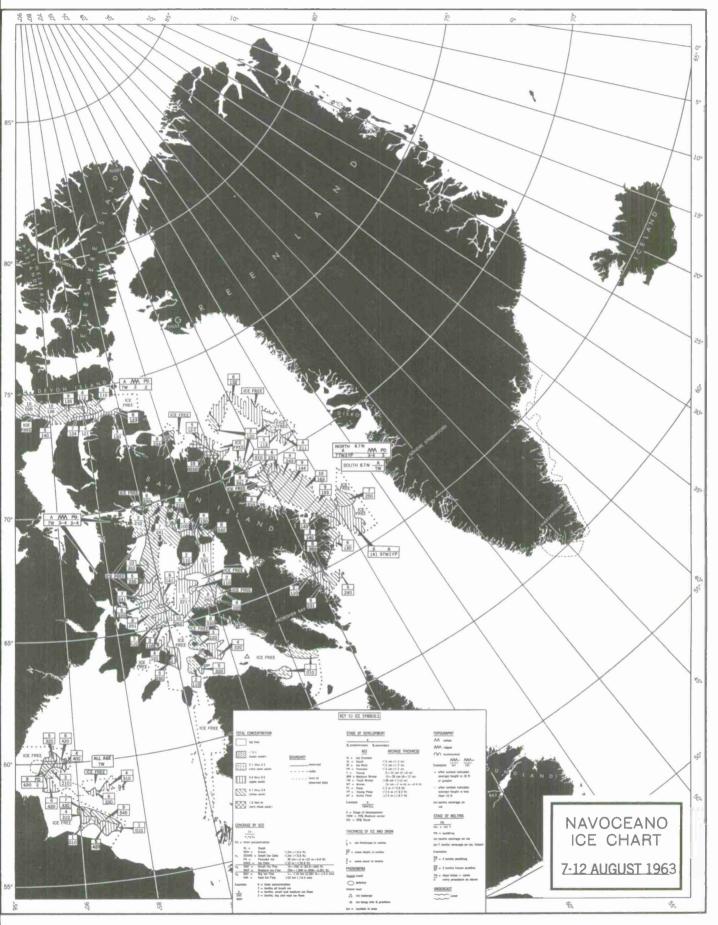


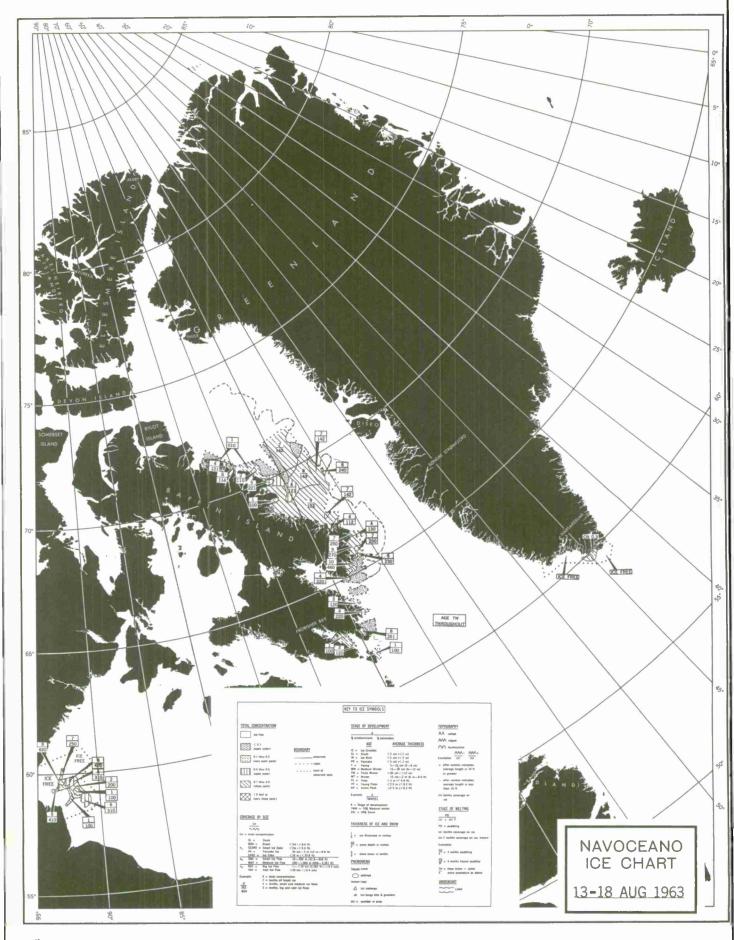


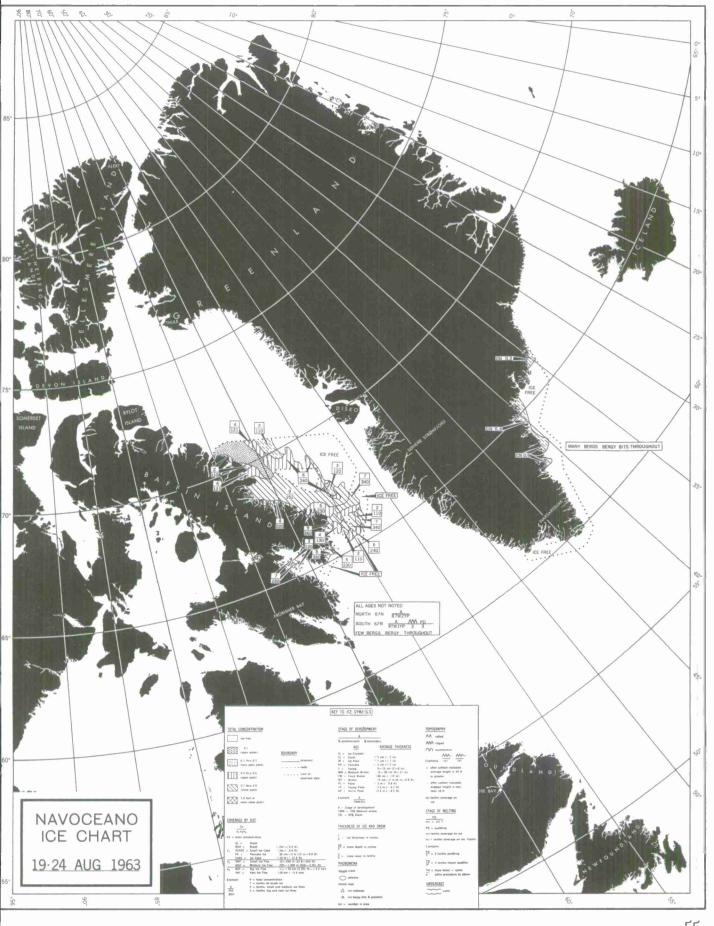


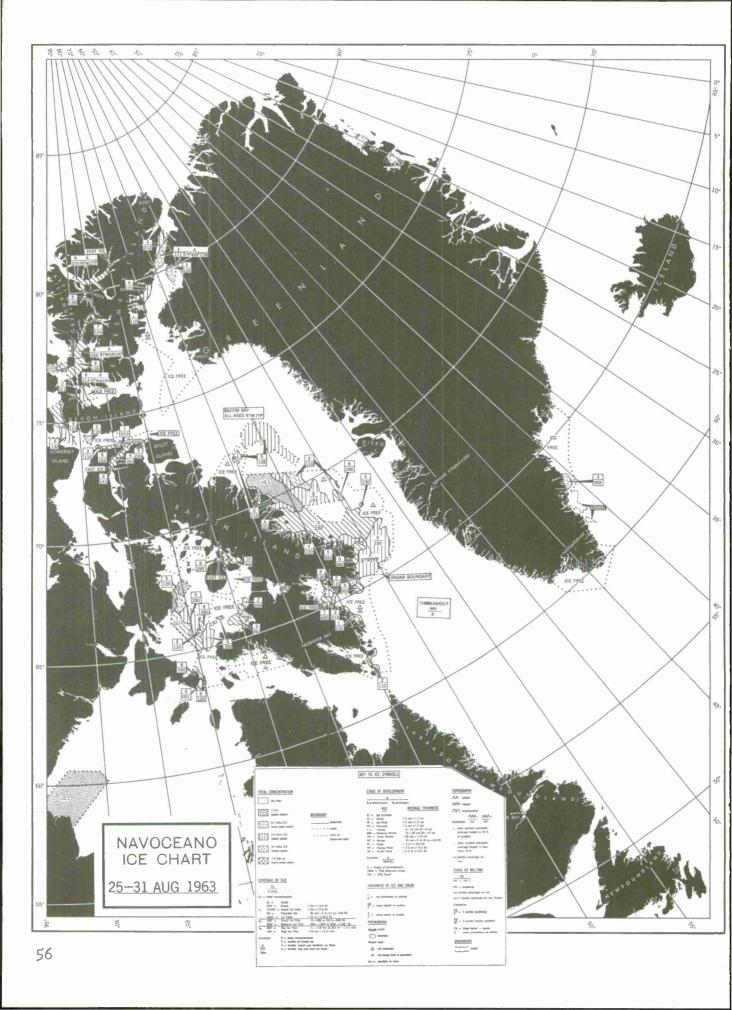


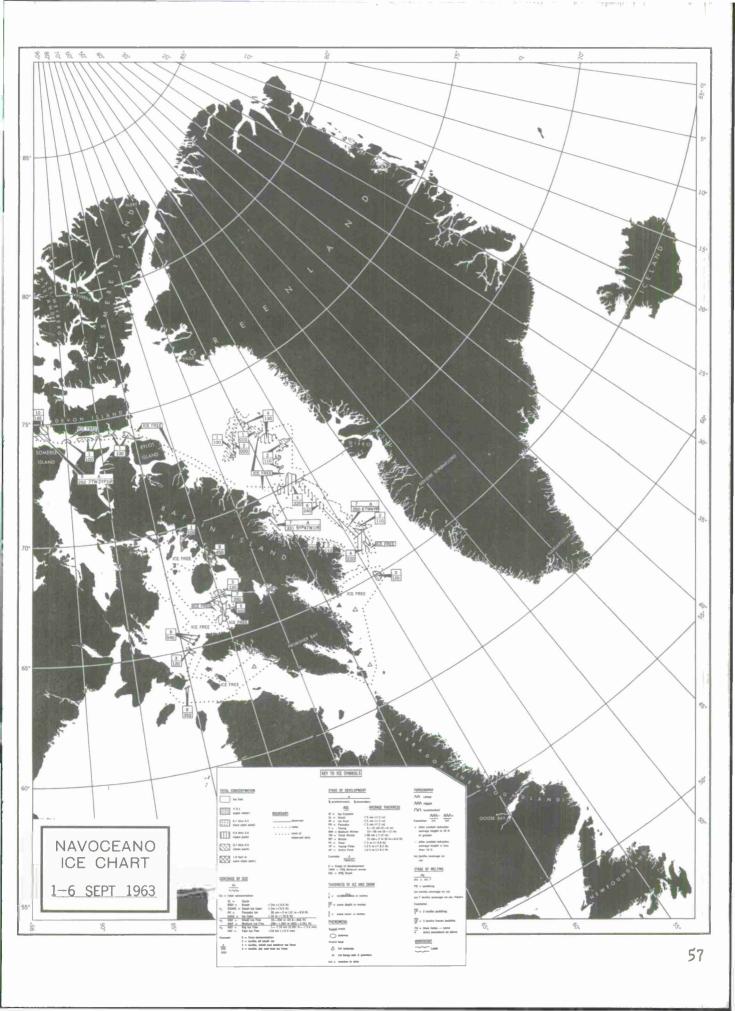


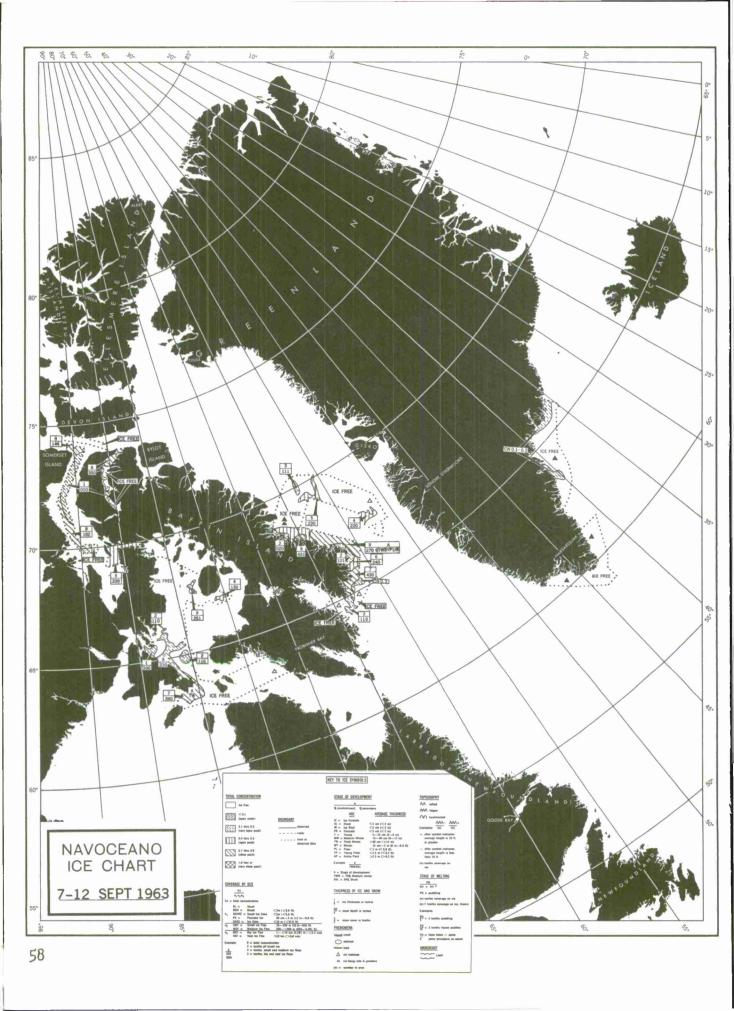


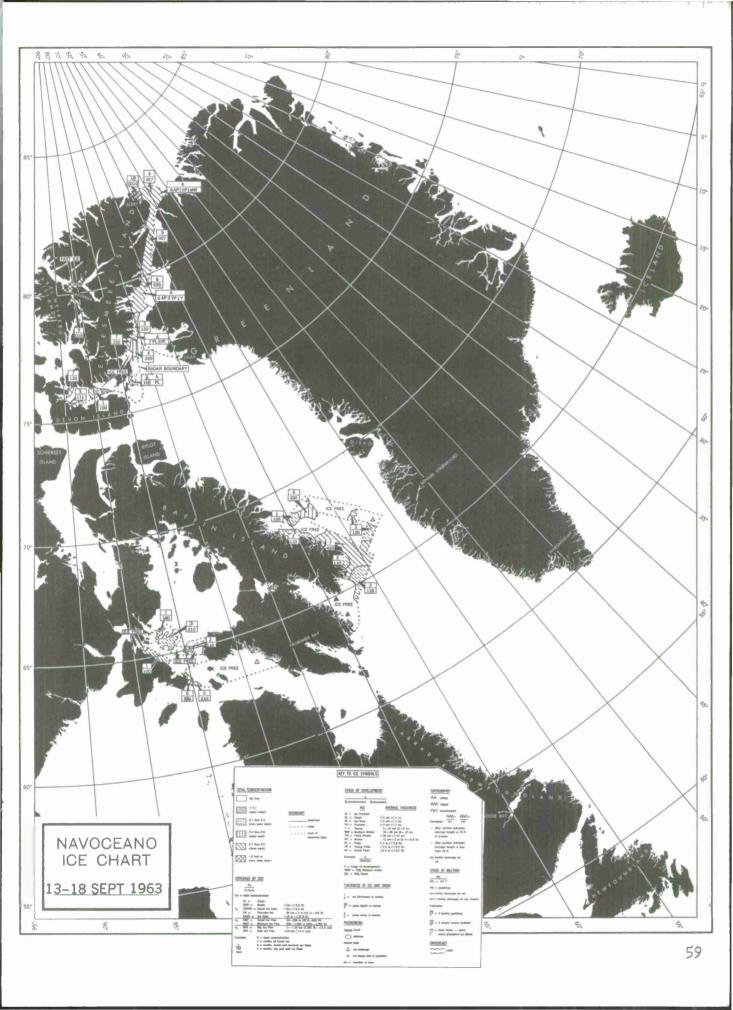


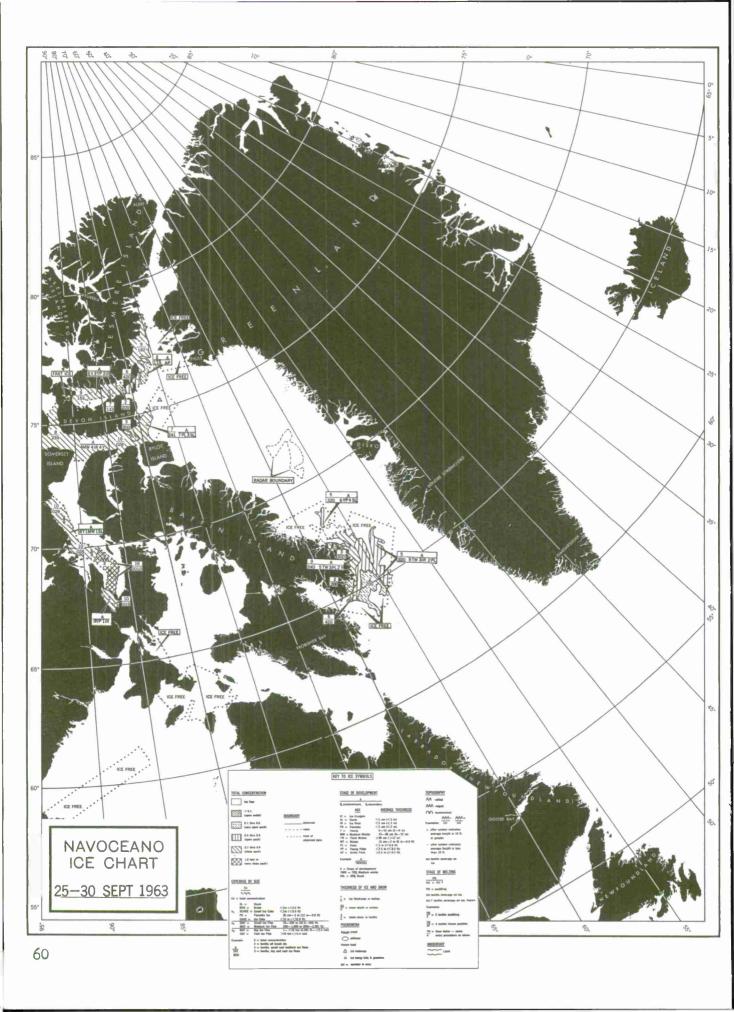


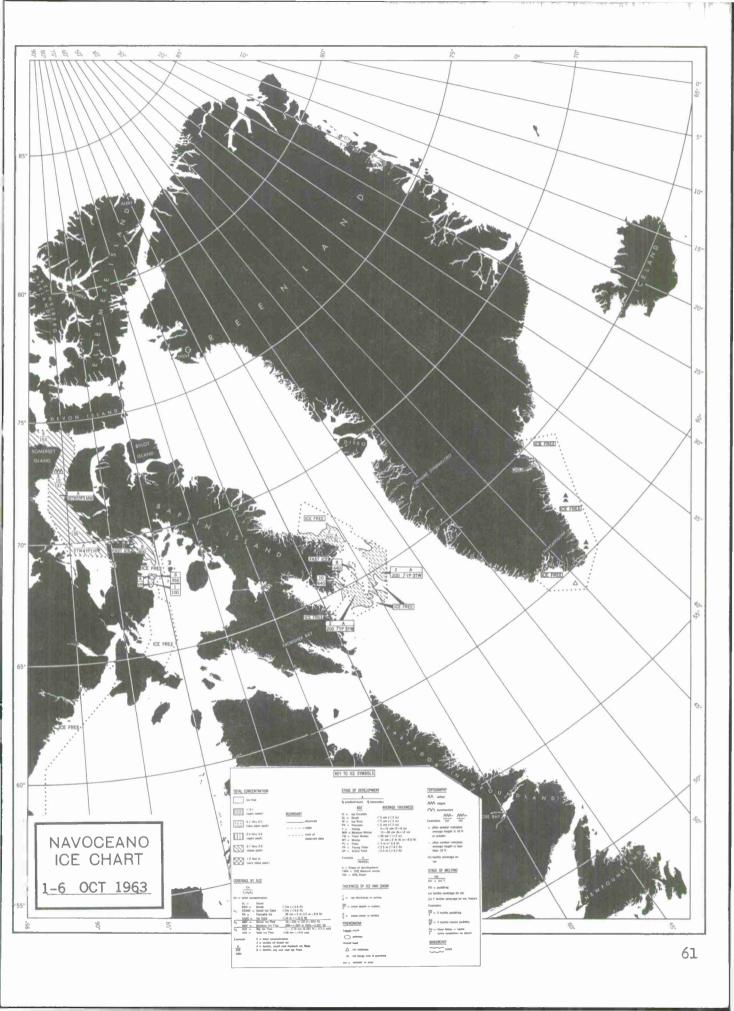


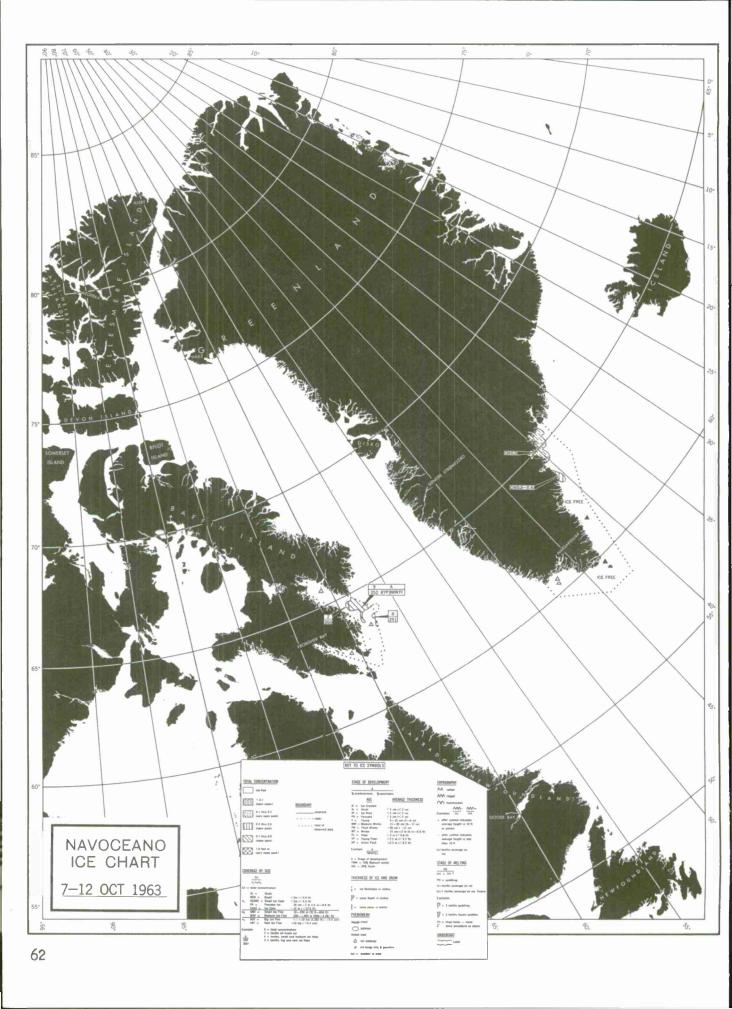


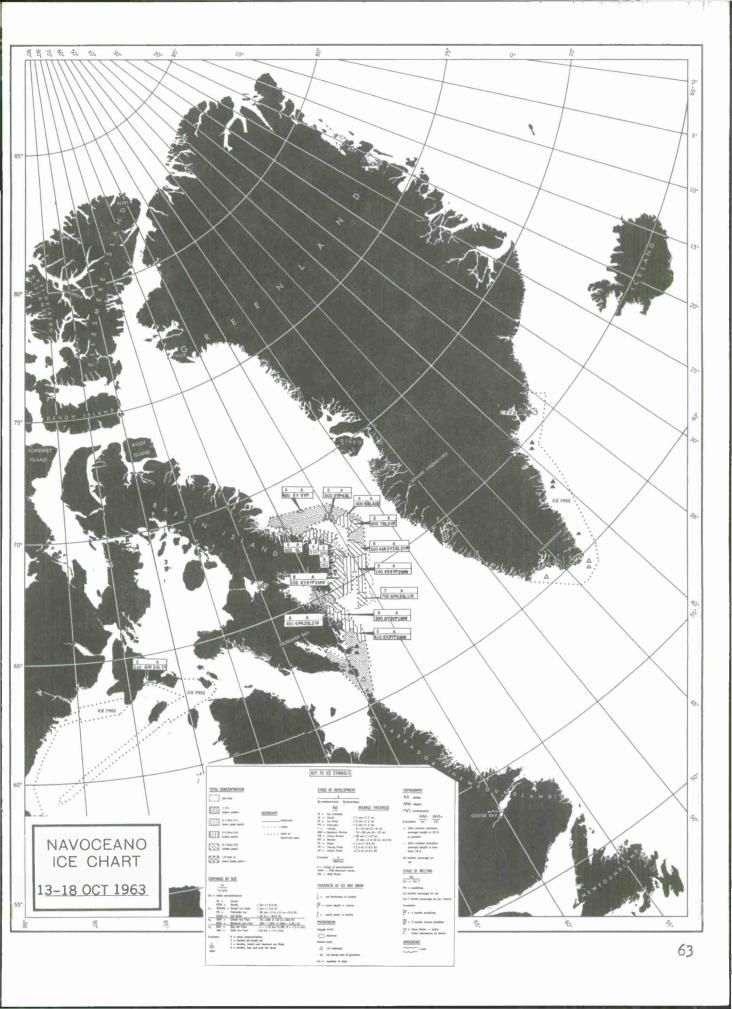


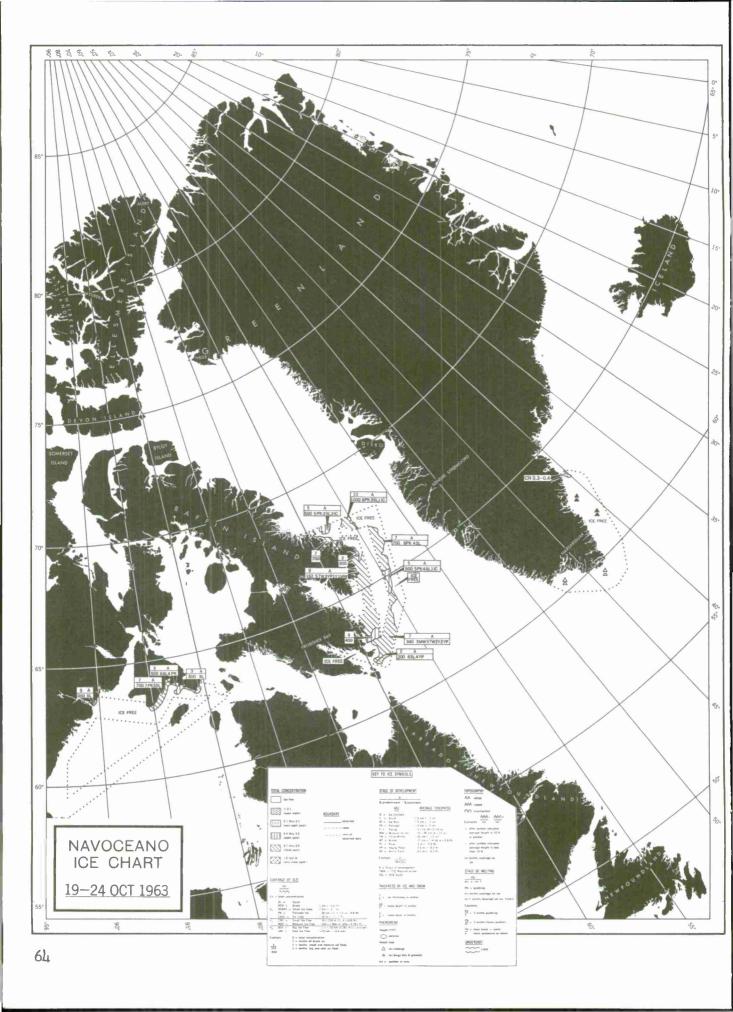


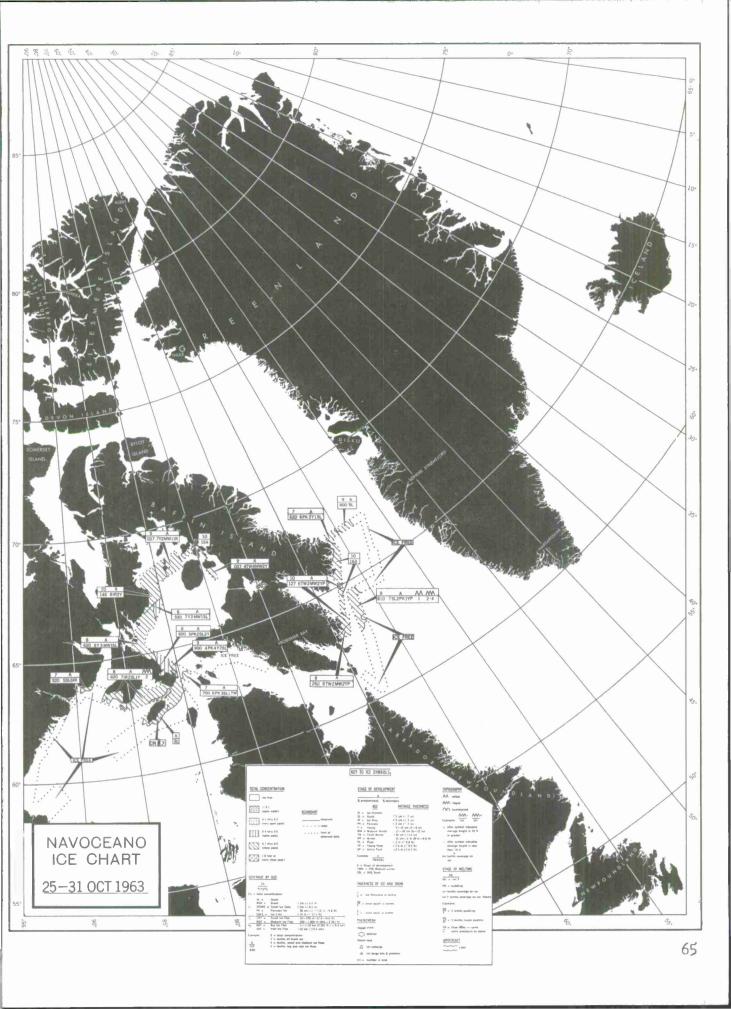


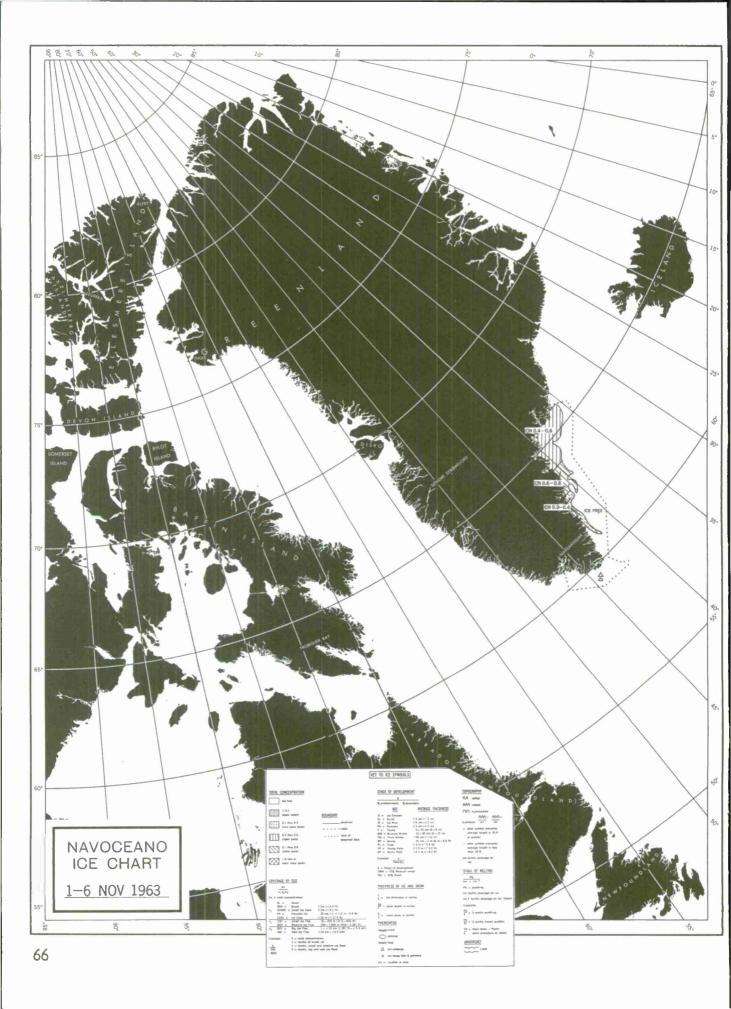


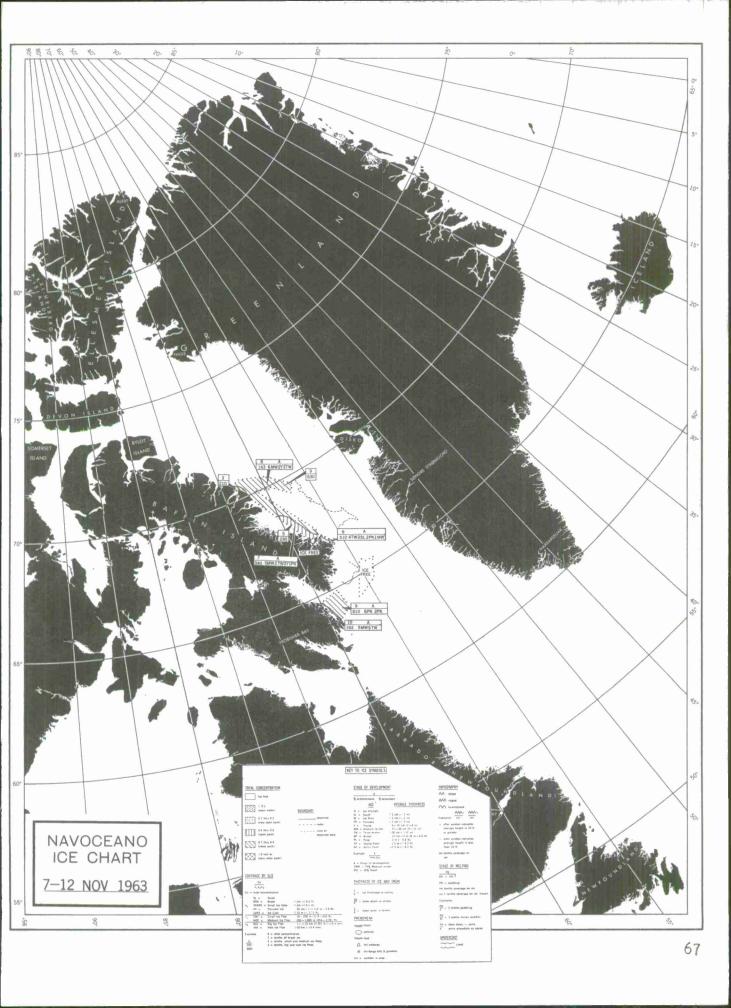


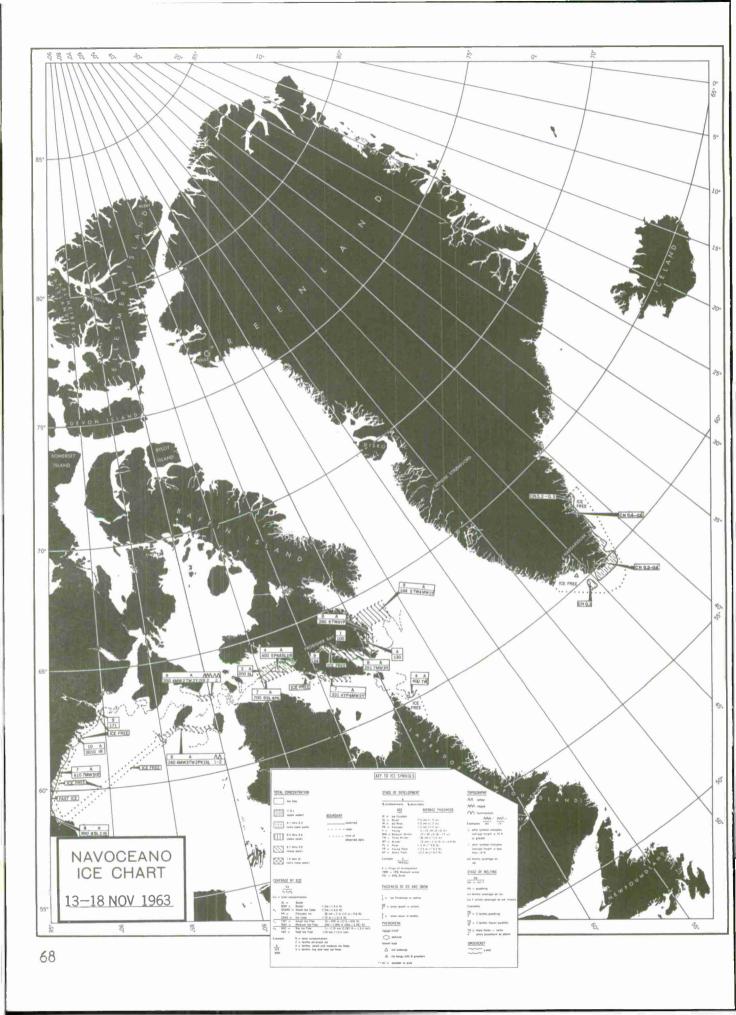


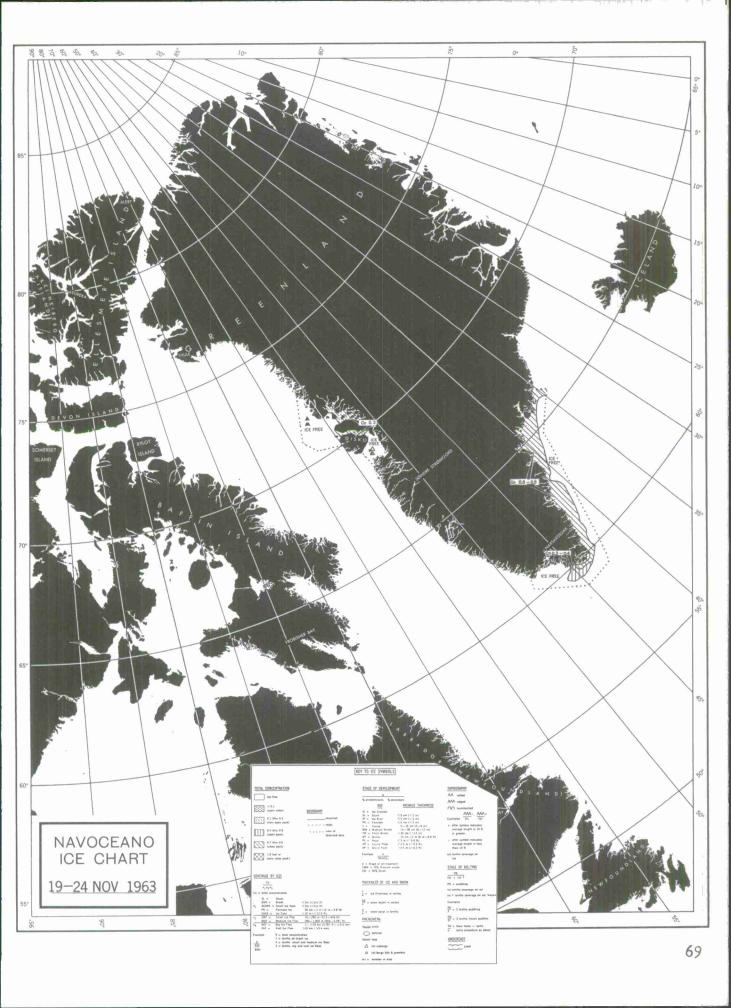


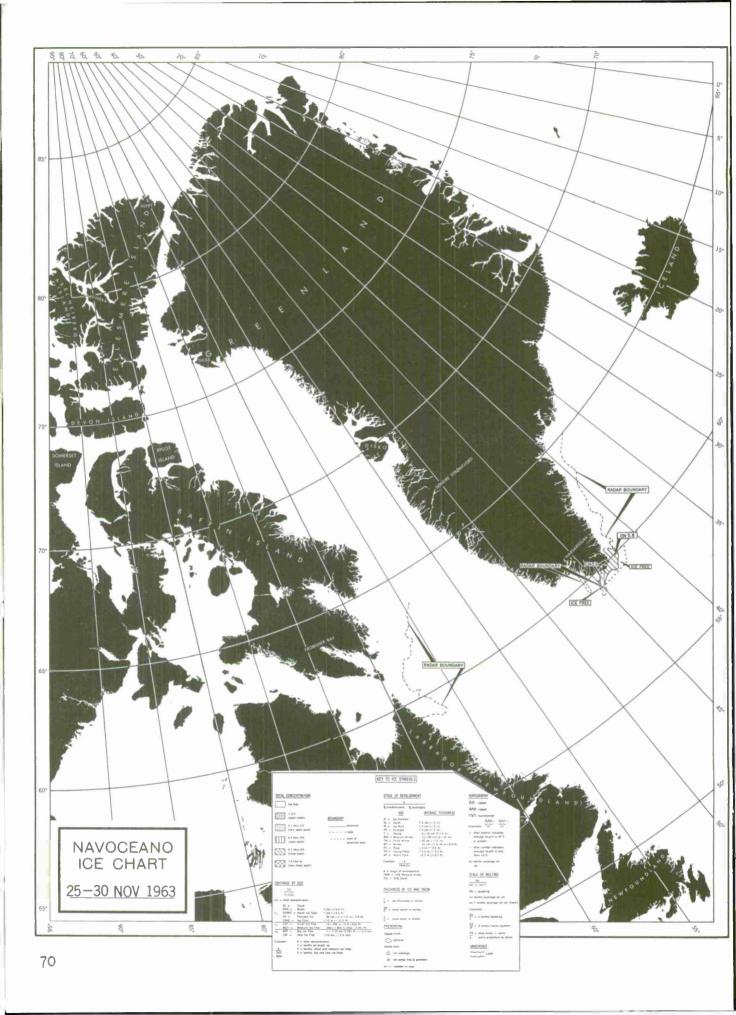


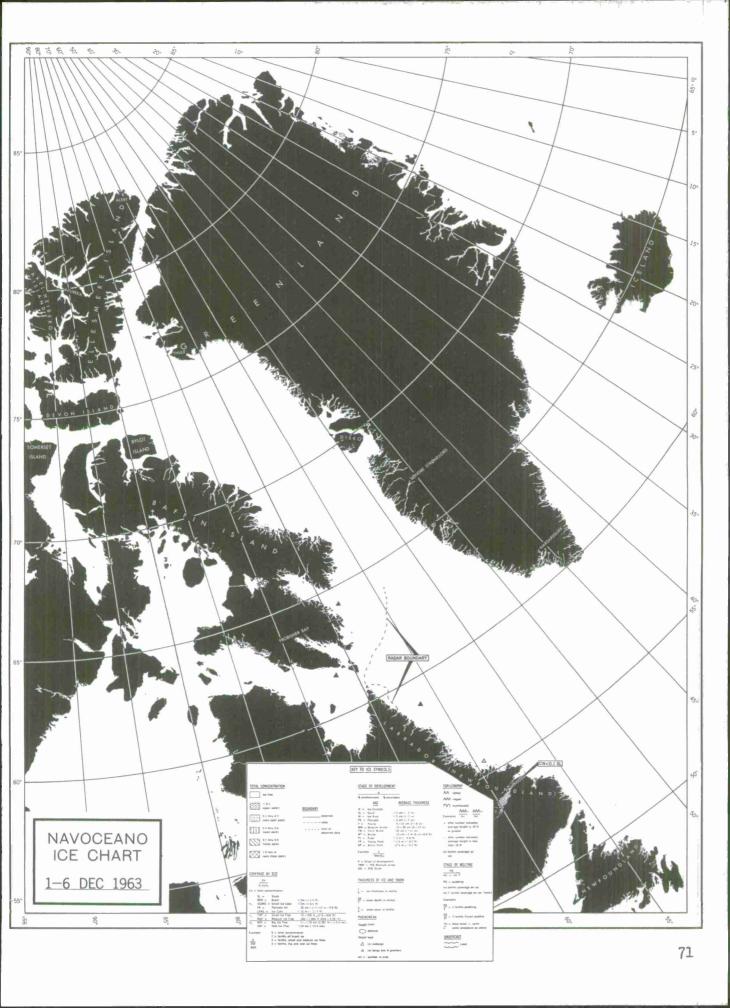


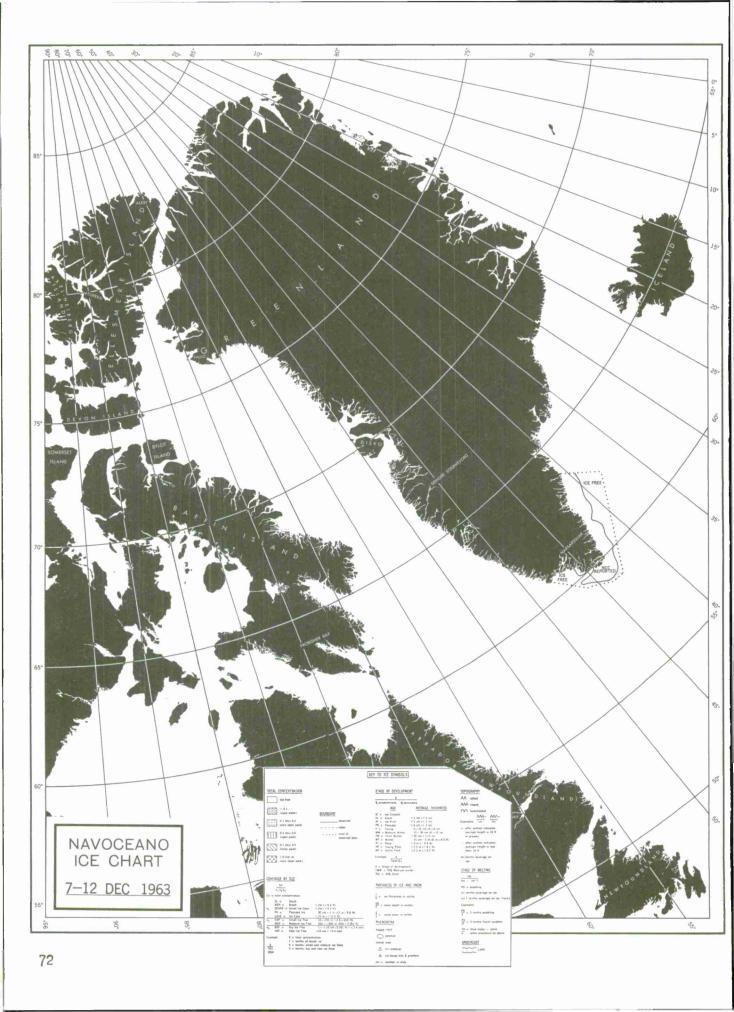


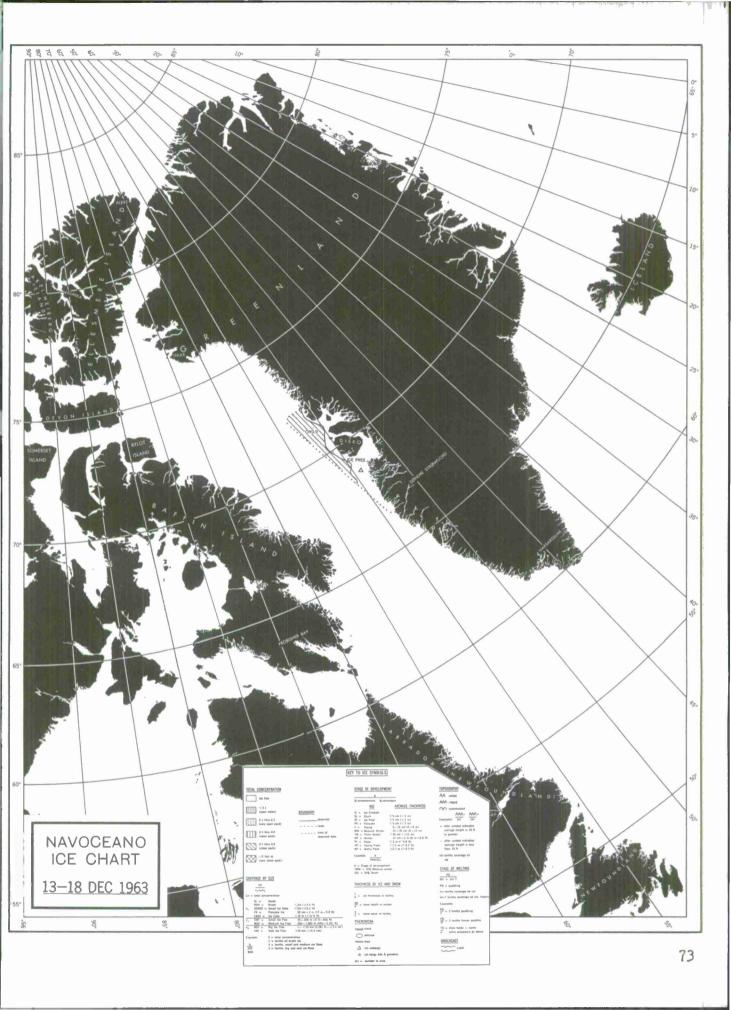


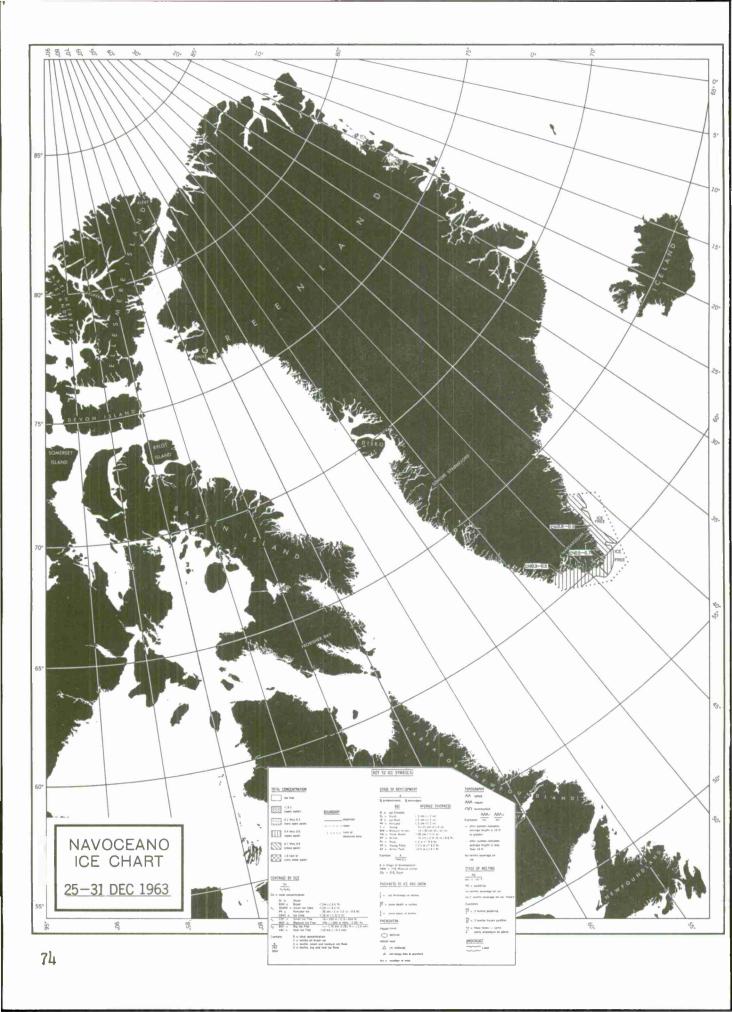












# APPENDIX B DANISH ICE RECONNAISSANCE CHARTS

# MINERVA MIKROFILM A/S

# DANISH ICE RECONNAISSANCE

ICE CENTRAL NARSSARSSUAQ

# GREENLAND 1963

THE DANISH METEOROLOGICAL INSTITUTE NAUTICAL DEPARTMENT GAMLEHAVE ALLE 22 CHARLOTTENLUND DENMARK

# LEGEND

# | Ice free | <0.1 (open water) | 0.1 thru 0.4 (scattered ice) | 0.5 thru 0.7 (broken ice) | 0.8 thru 0.9 (close ice) | 1.0 (consolidated or fast ice)

COVERAGE (CONCENTRATION)

# 1.0 (consolidated of fast ice

# ICE OF LAND ORIGIN A Icebergs—many (>20)

△ lcebergs—few (<20)

A Bergy bits (>50) and growlers (>100)

A Bergy bits (<50) and growlers (<100)

Single iceberg

# COVERAGE BY SIZE

 $\frac{Cn}{n_1, n_2, n_3}$ of slush, brash

n<sub>1</sub>=tenths of slush, brash, and block
n<sub>2</sub>=tenths of small and medium floes
n<sub>3</sub>=tenths of giant floes and field

Example: 9 243 BSH

9 = total concentration 2 = tenths all brash ice

4 = tenths, small and medium ice floes

3 = tenths, big and vast ice floes

### THICKNESS AND SNOW COVER

Thickness:  $\frac{T}{n}$  where n=feet and inches Snow cover:  $\frac{S}{n}$ ,  $\frac{S}{C}$ ,  $\frac{S}{D}$ ,  $\frac{S}{O}$ 

C=ice uniformly snow covered

D=snow cover in drifts

0=no snow cover present

# AGE

% dominant, % secondary

Si=Slush W=Winter ice

Y=Young ice P=Polar ice

Examples:  $\frac{A}{60W, 40Pl} \frac{\text{etc.}}{W}$ 

### TOPOGRAPHY

AA Rafted ice

AAA Ridged ice

OOO Hummocks

Extent: H=very extensive

Extent: W=Aeth extension

L=few present

When no entry appears beneath symbol extent is moderate Examples:

H = very extensive ridging

\[
\lambda \times = \text{moderate rafting} \\
\times \cap = \text{few hummocks}
\]

# WATER FEATURES

Puddles: dominant amount in tenths unless

frozen or rotten

F=Frozen R=Rotten

Examples:  $\frac{Pd}{3}$ ,  $\frac{Pd}{F}$ ,  $\frac{Pd}{R}$ 

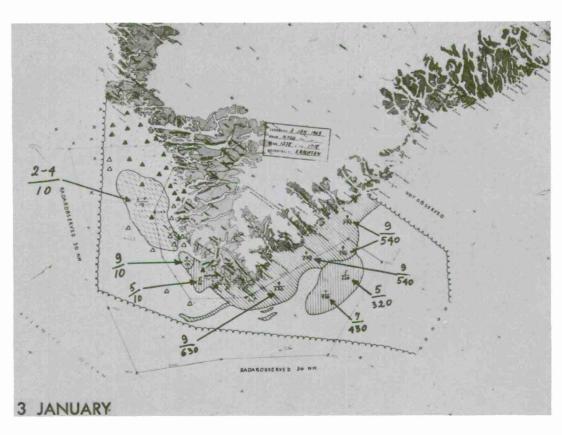
\*\*\*\*\* Crack Lead Polynya

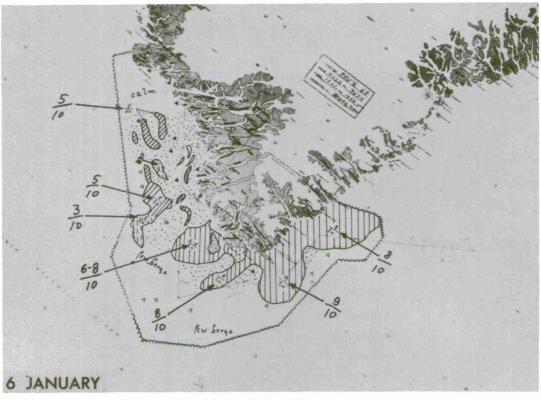
# BOUNDARY

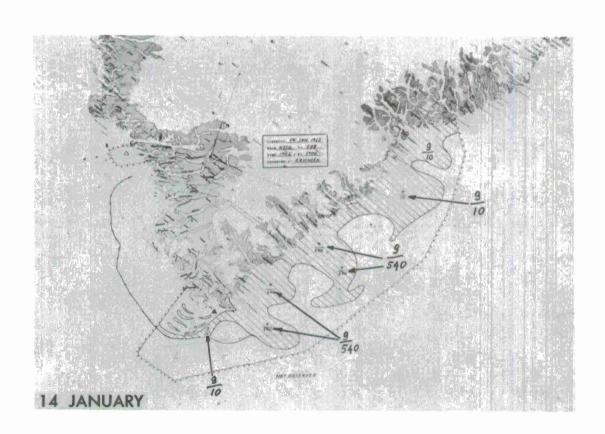
--- Observed

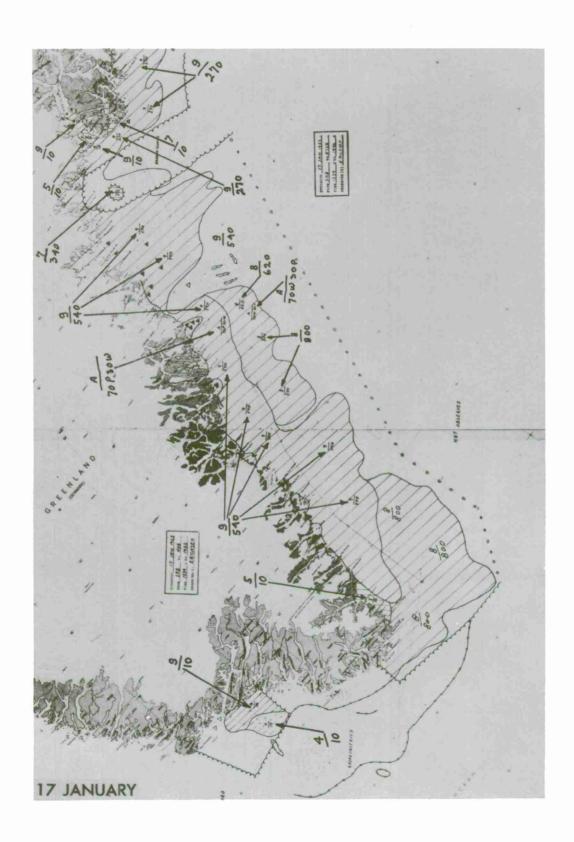
O O O O O Limit of observed data

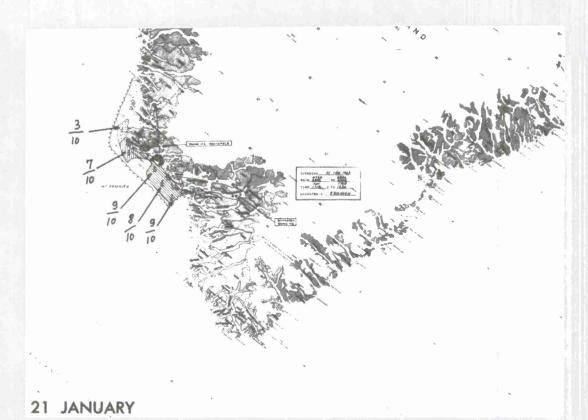
UNDERCAST Undercast (Ilmits)

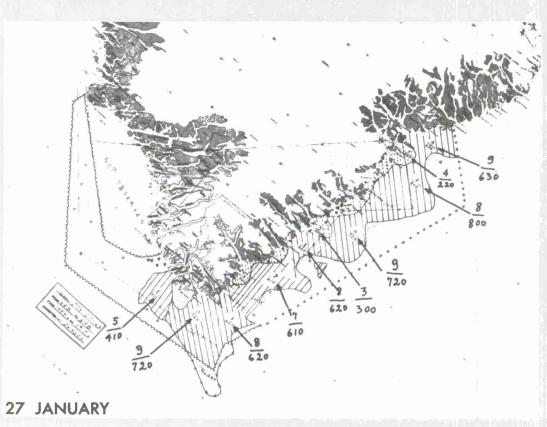


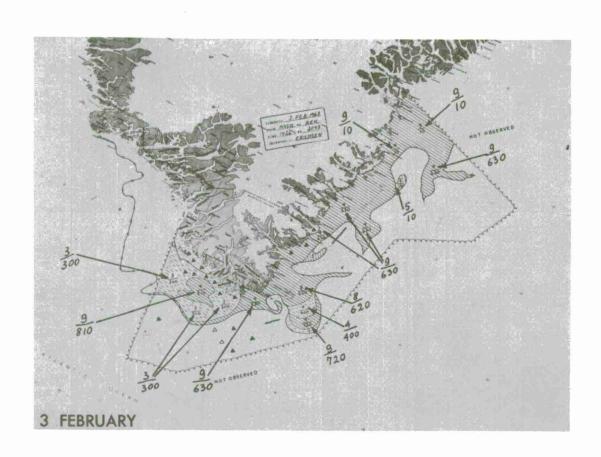


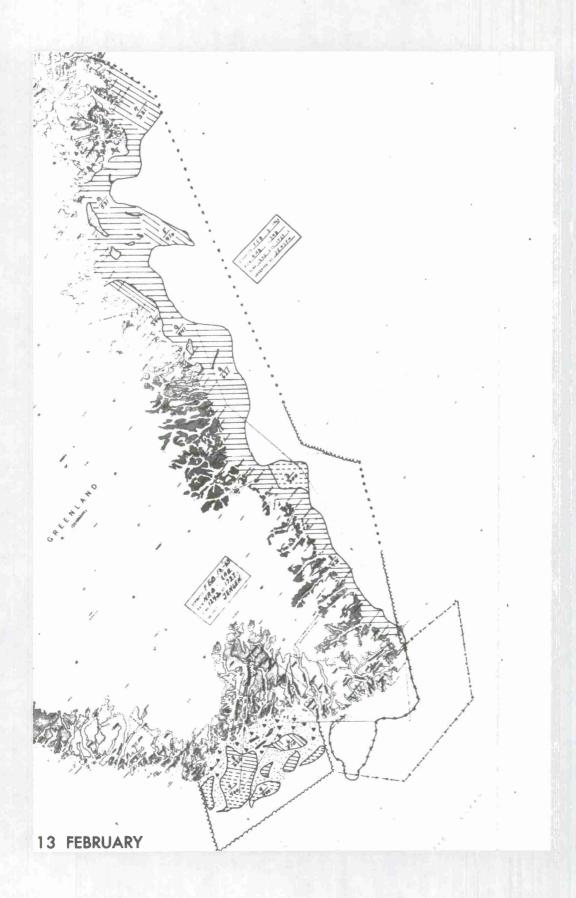


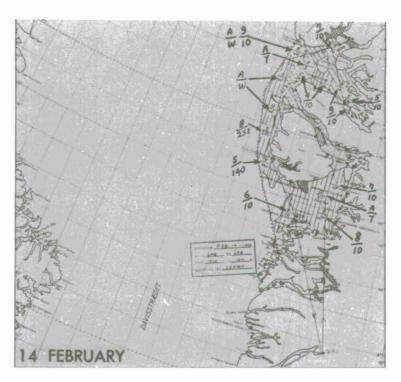


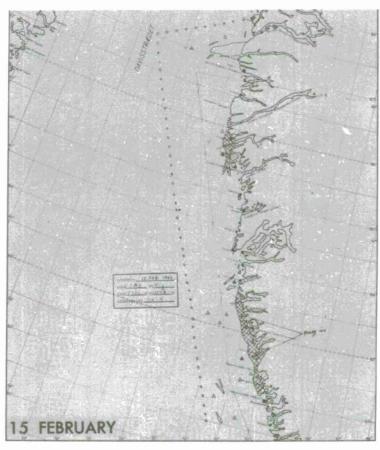


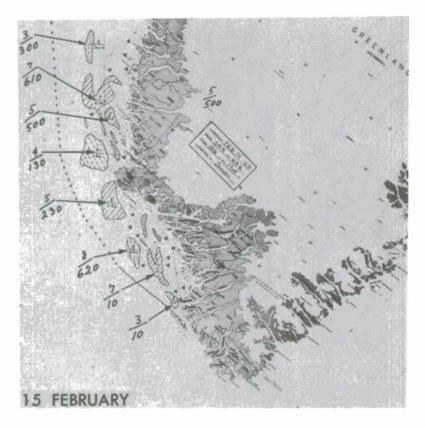


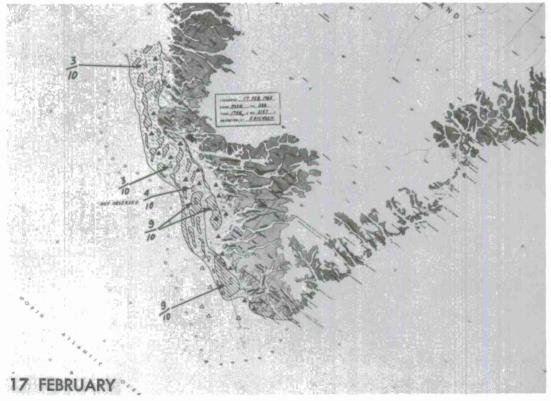


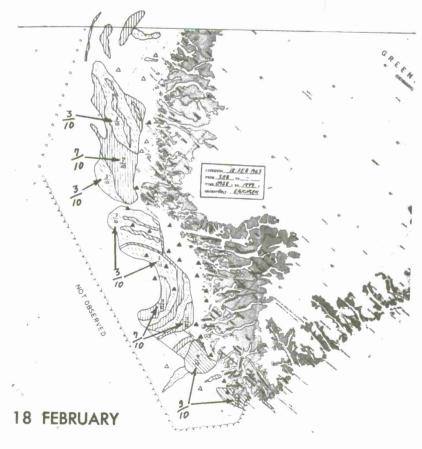


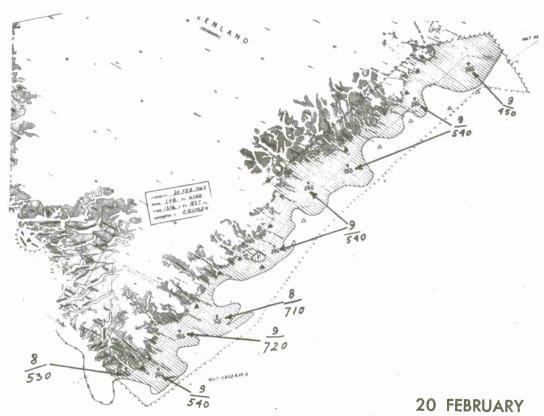


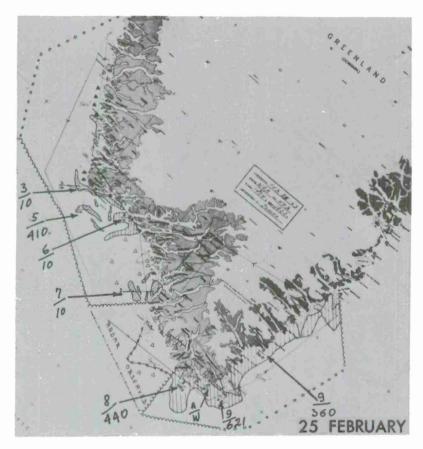


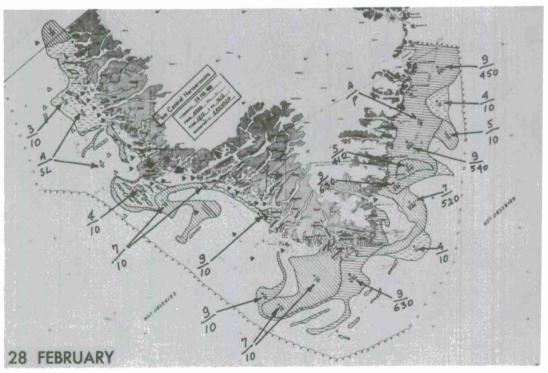


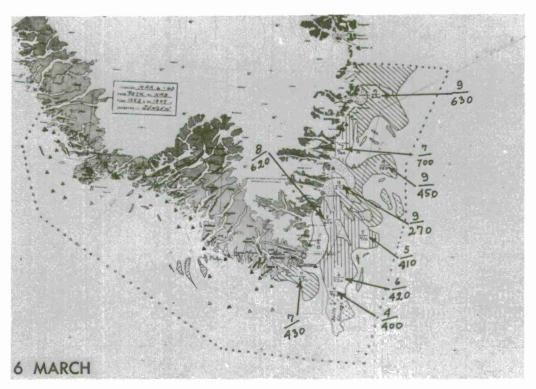


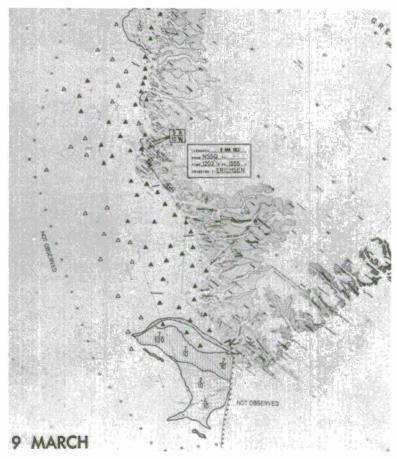


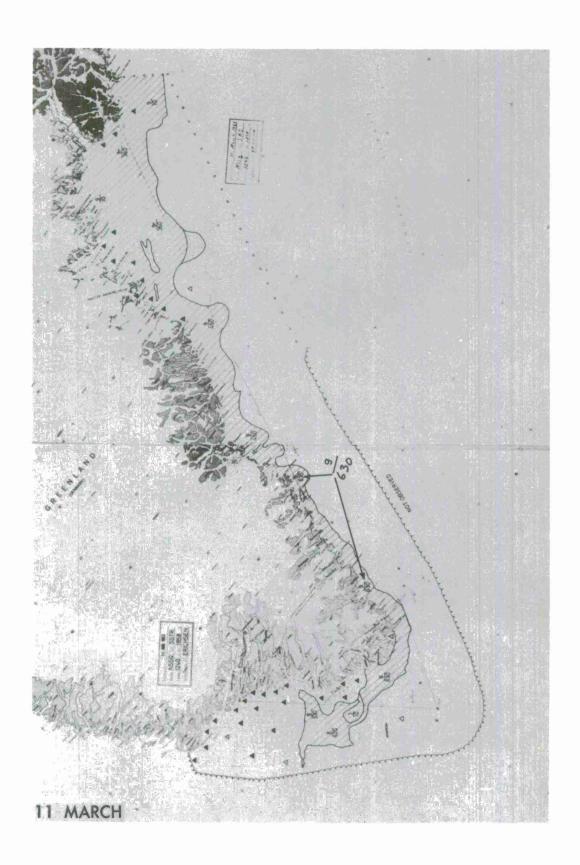


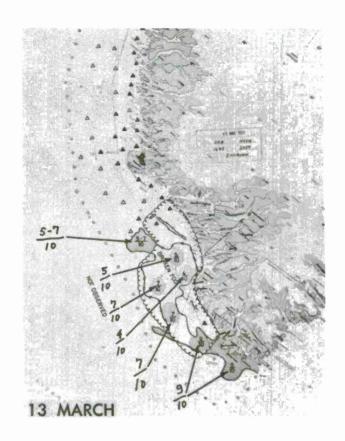


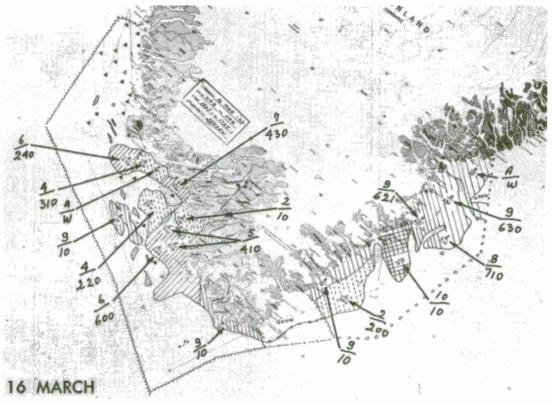


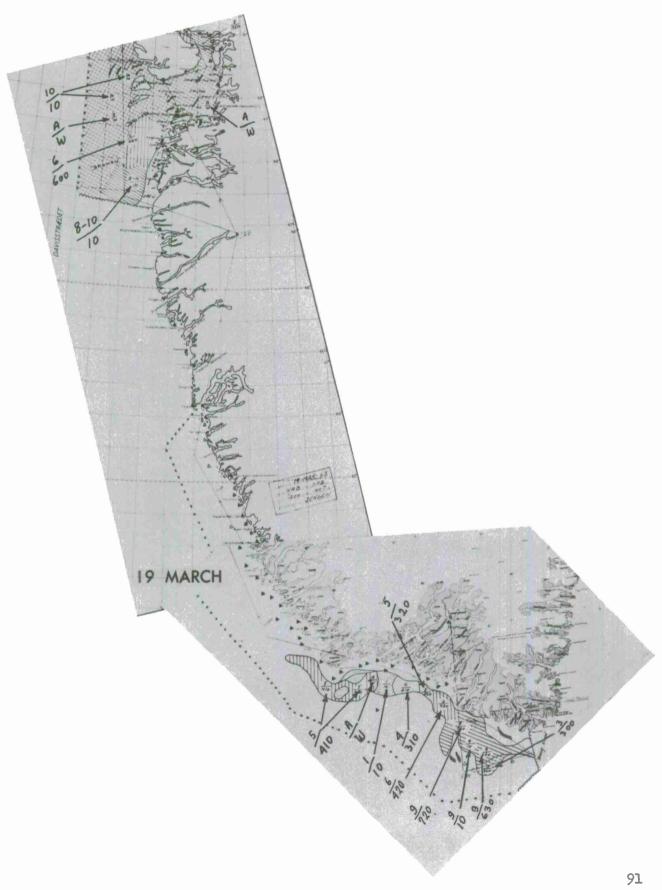


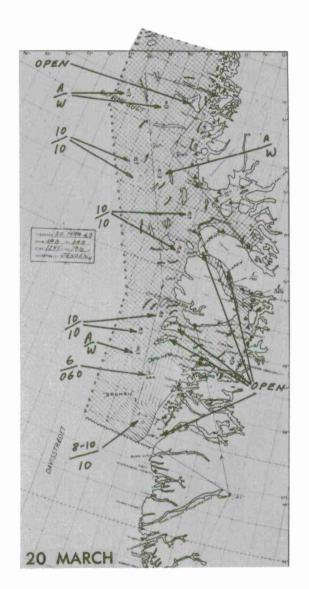


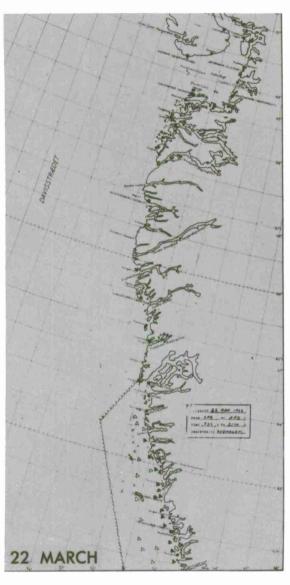


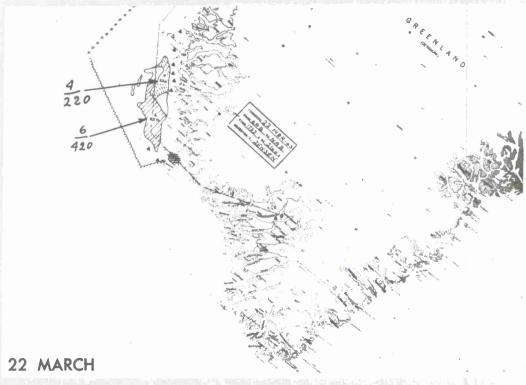


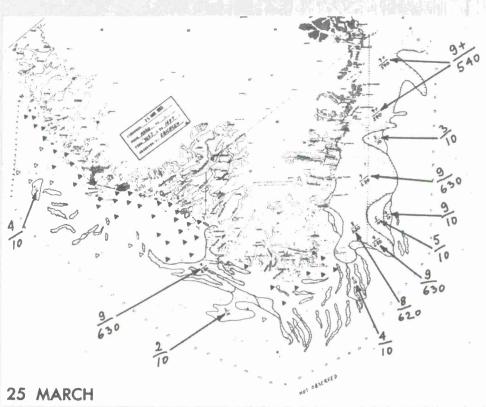


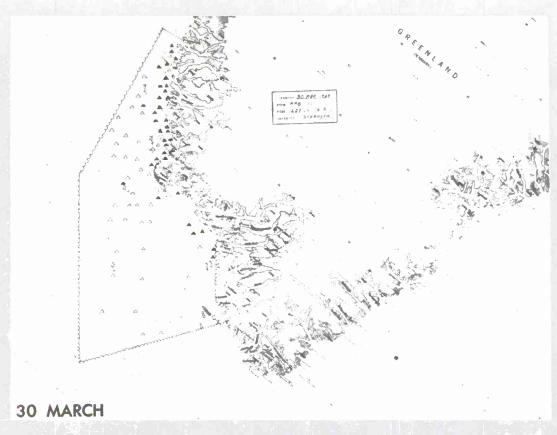


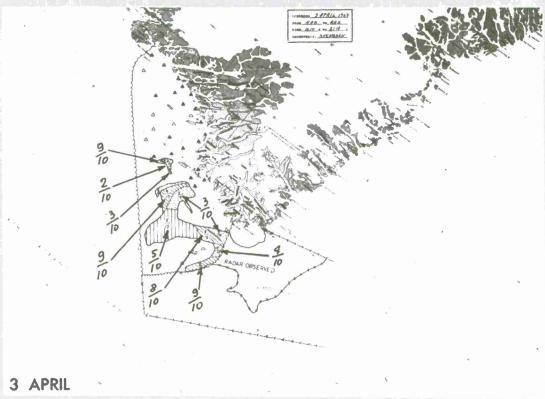


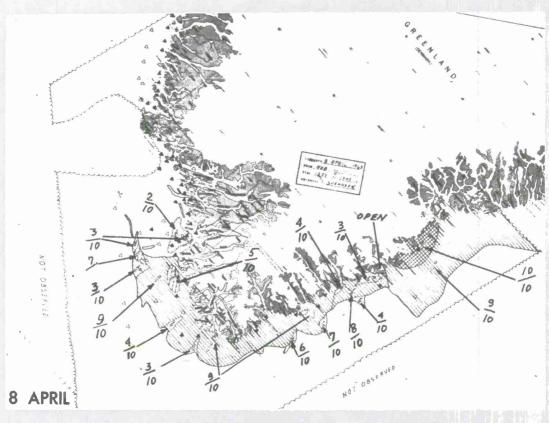


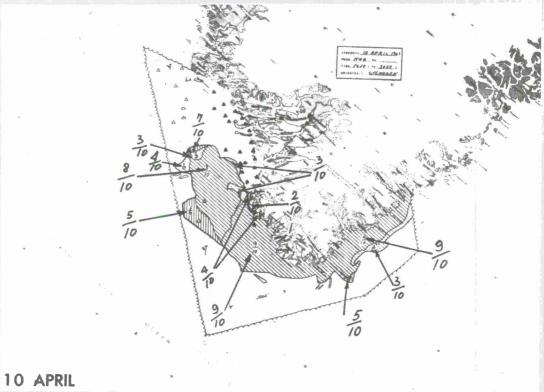


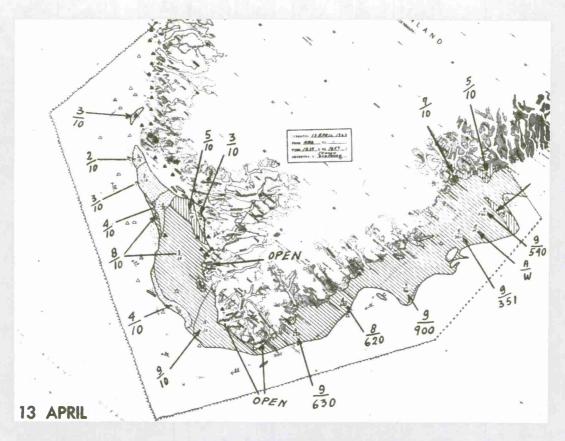


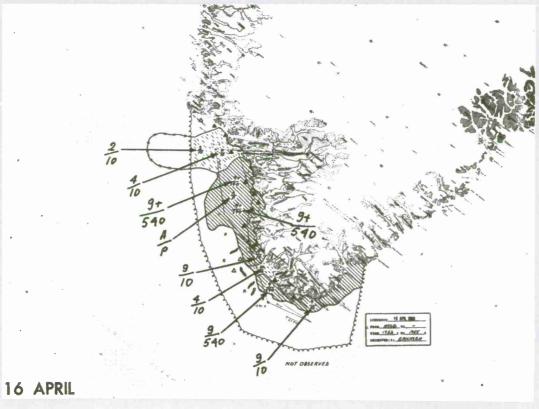


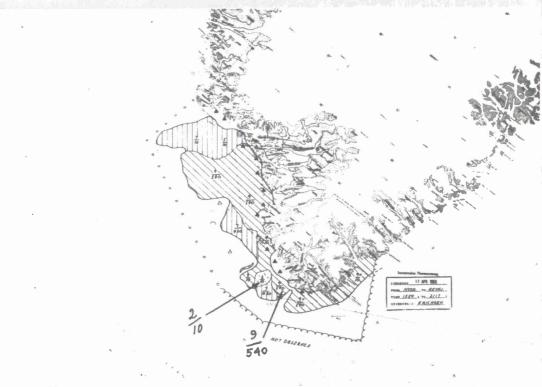




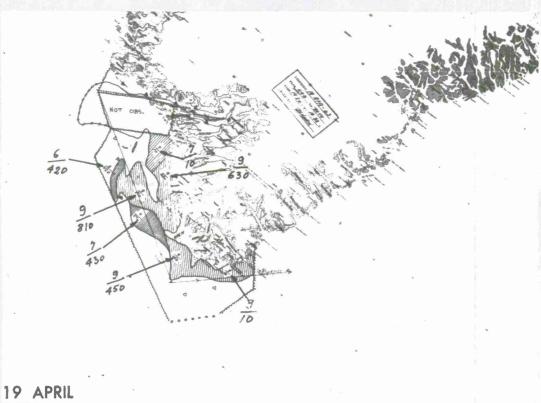


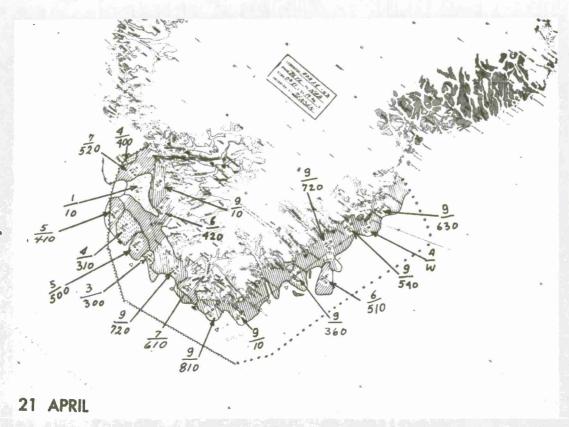


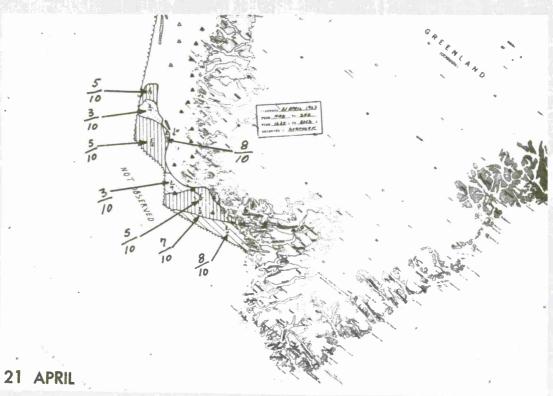


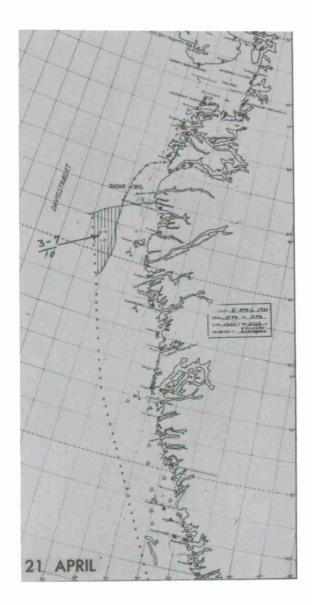


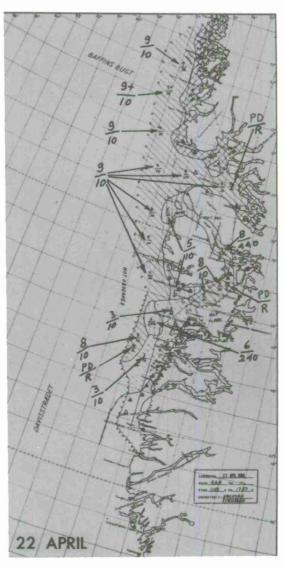
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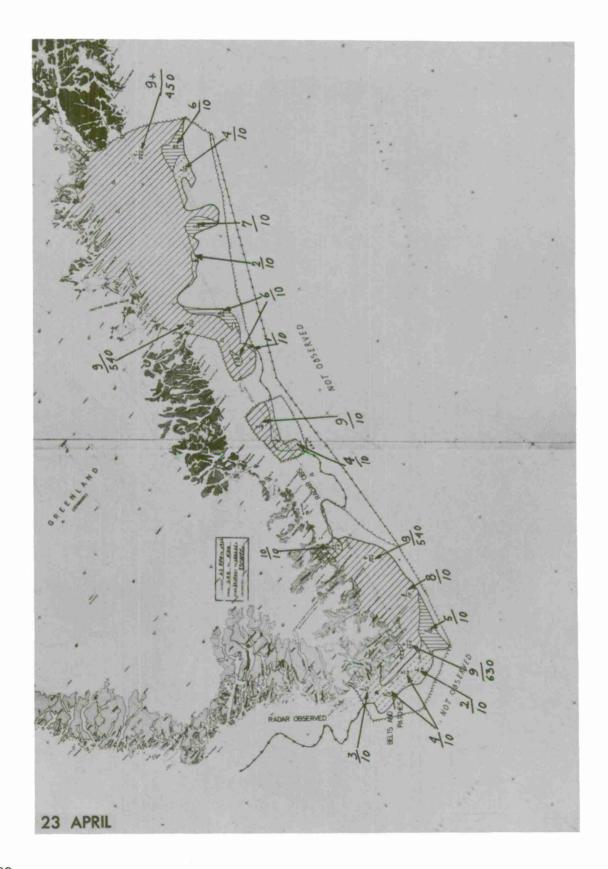


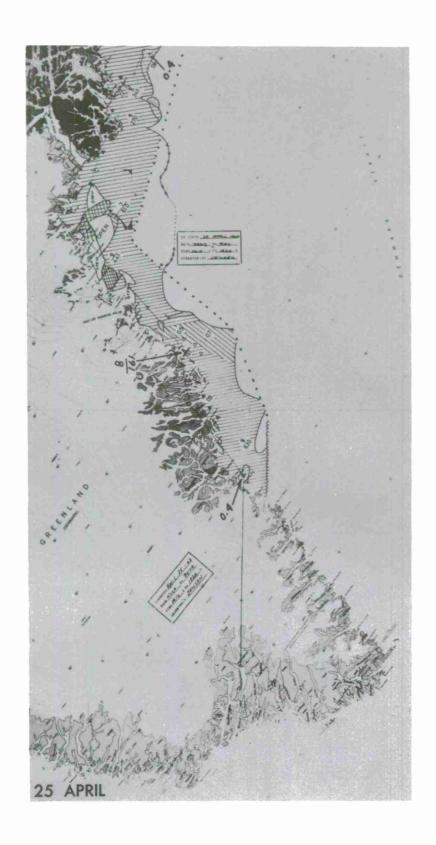


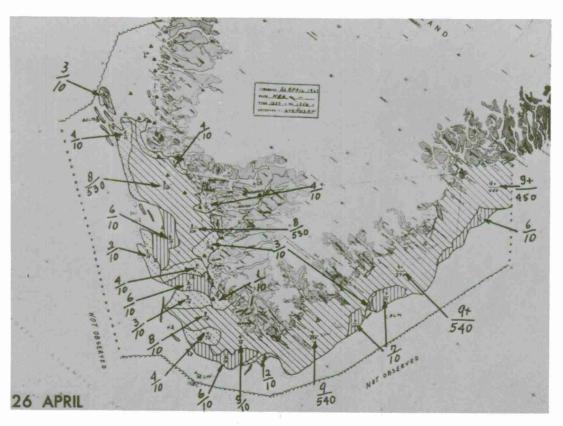


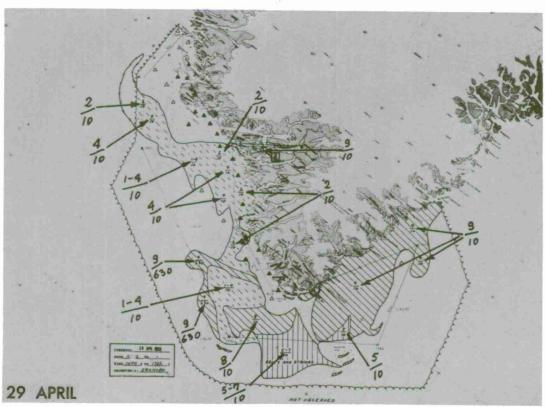


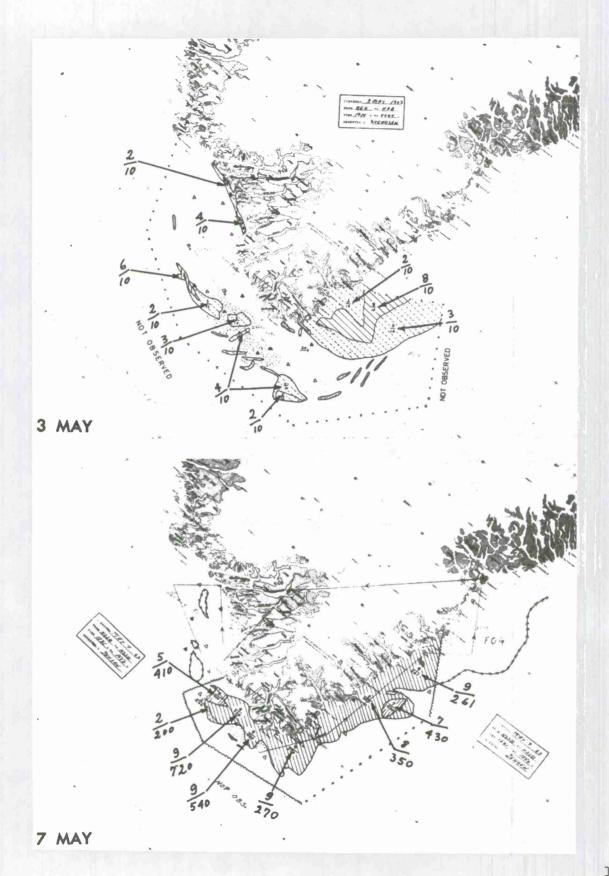


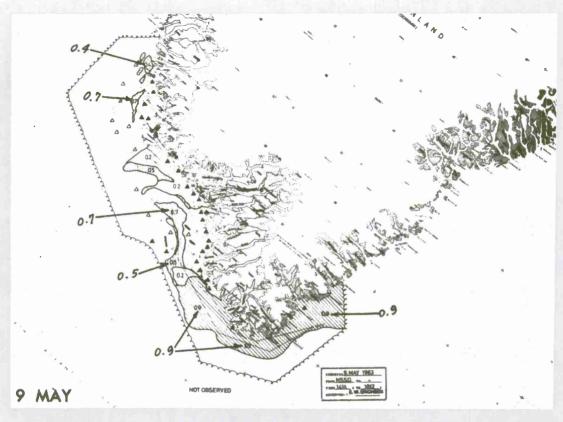


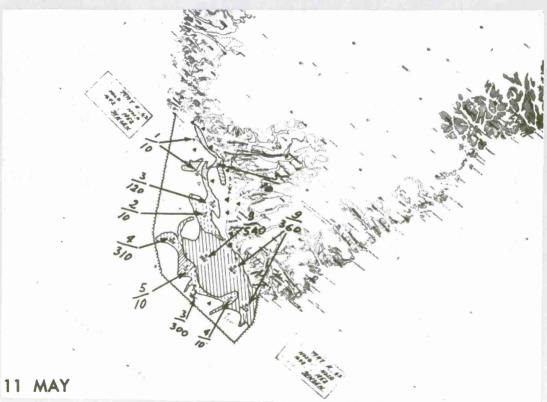


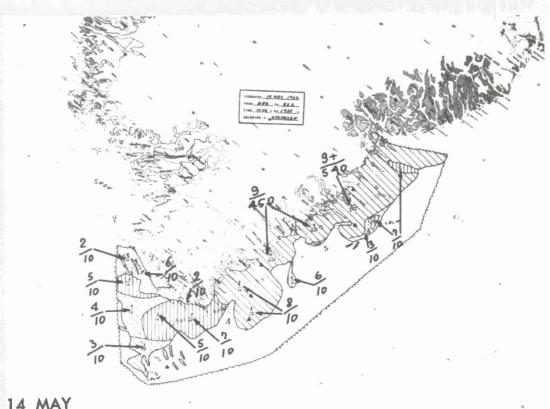




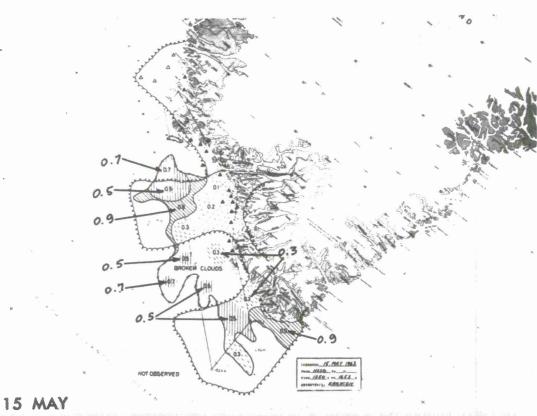


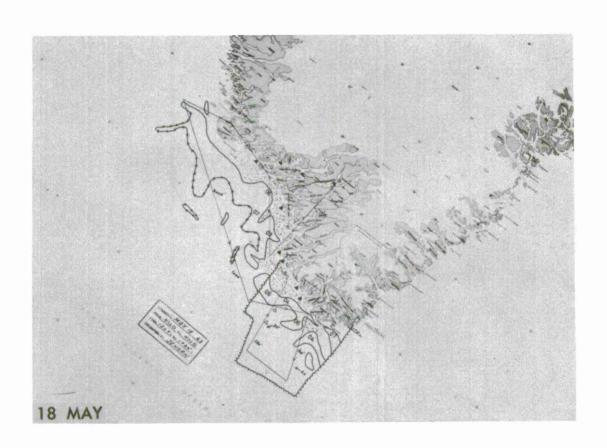




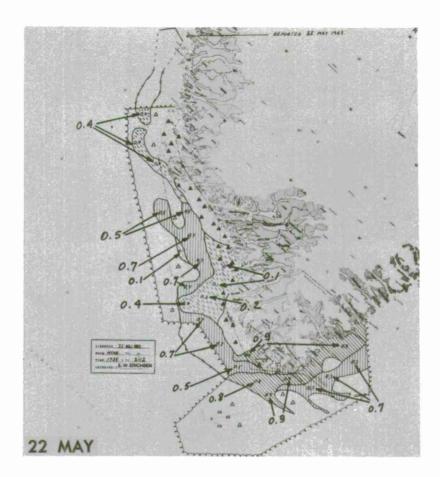


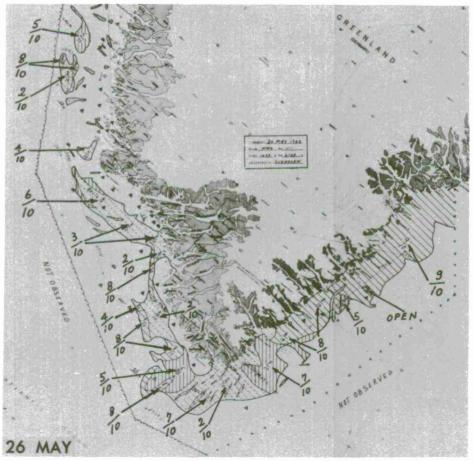


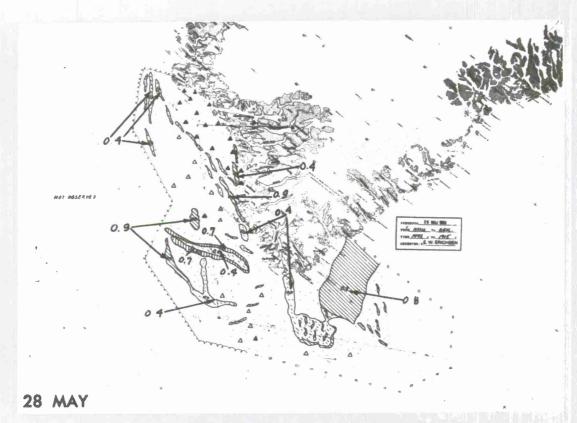


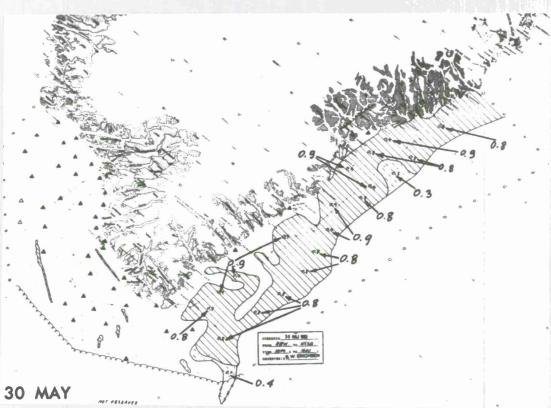


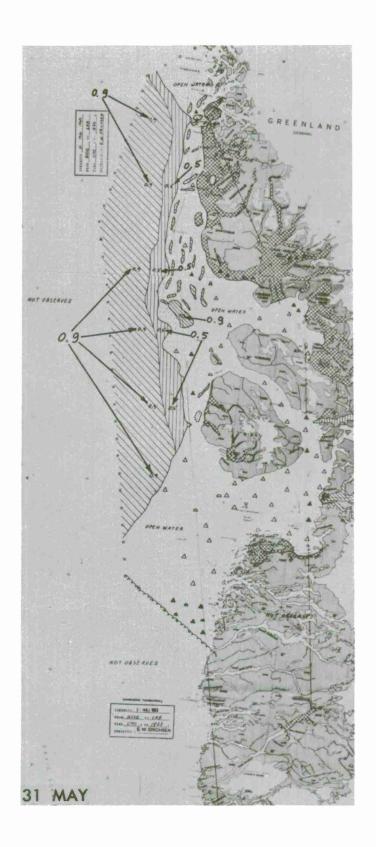


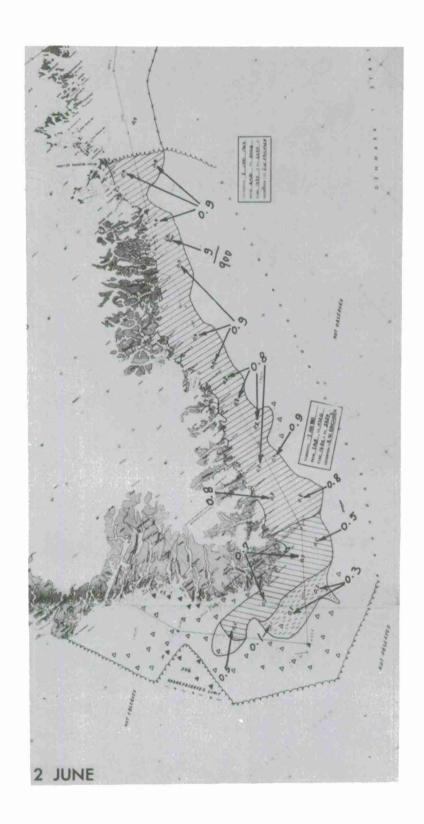




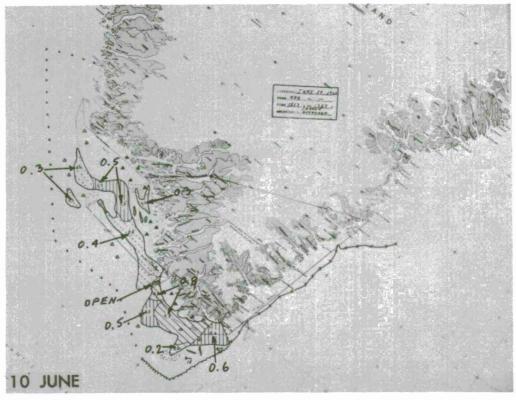




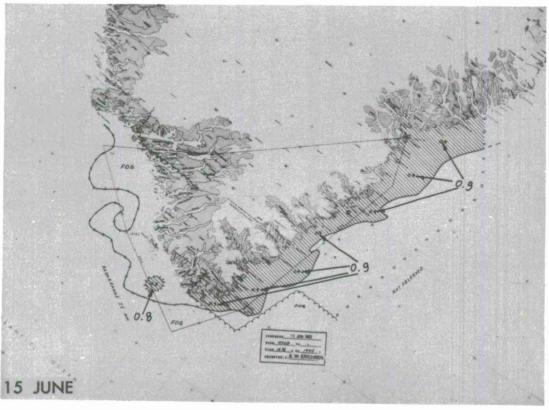


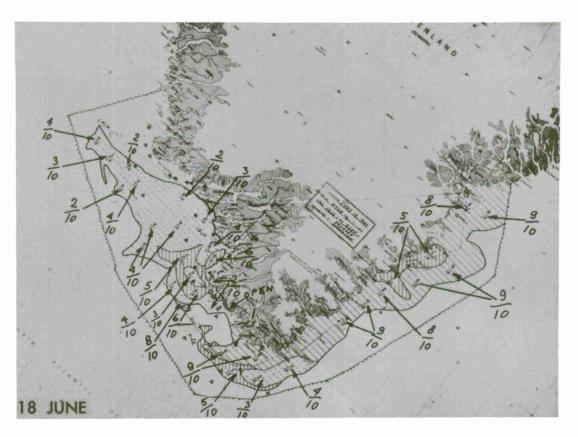


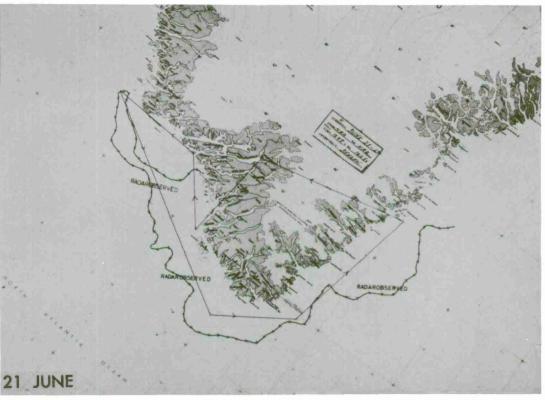


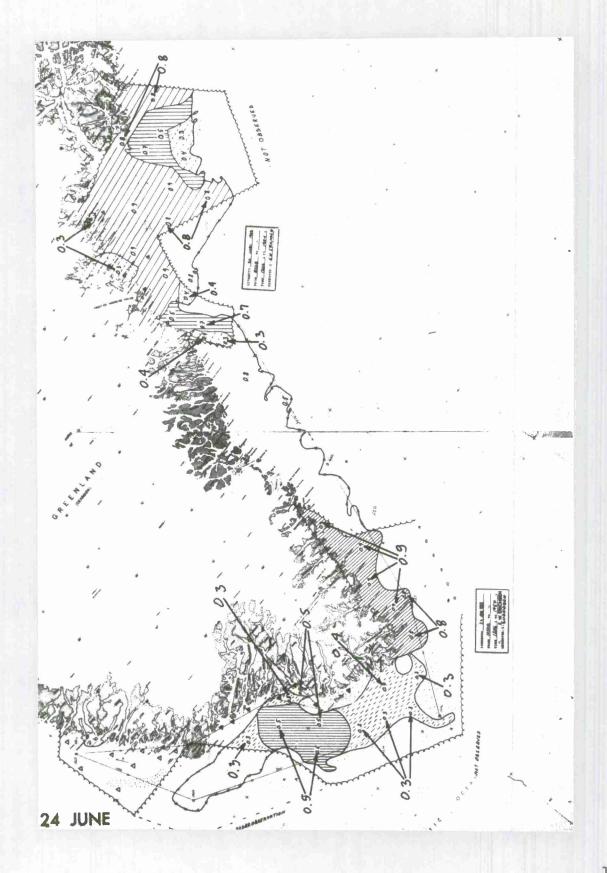


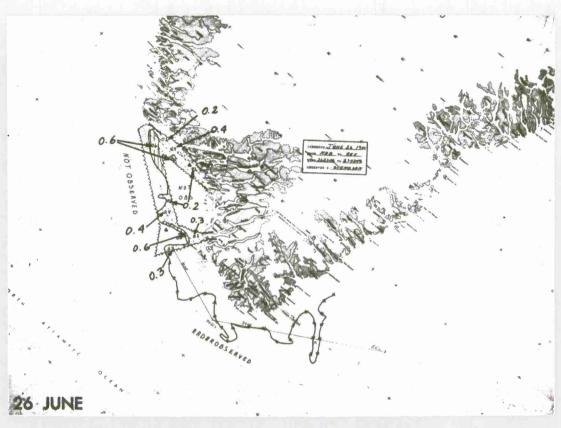


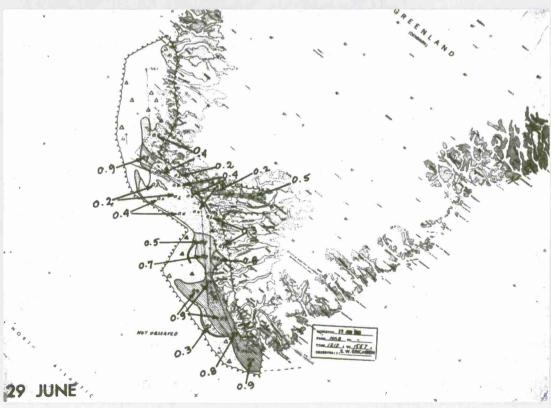


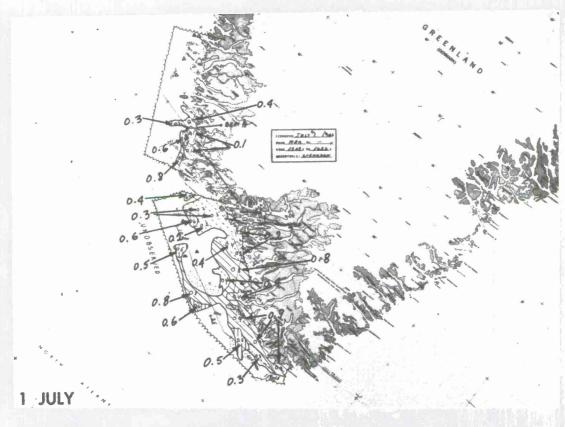


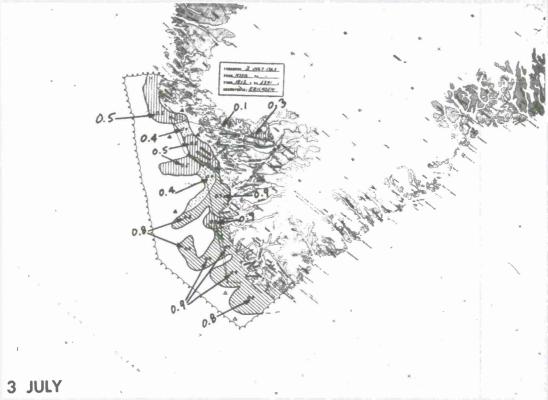


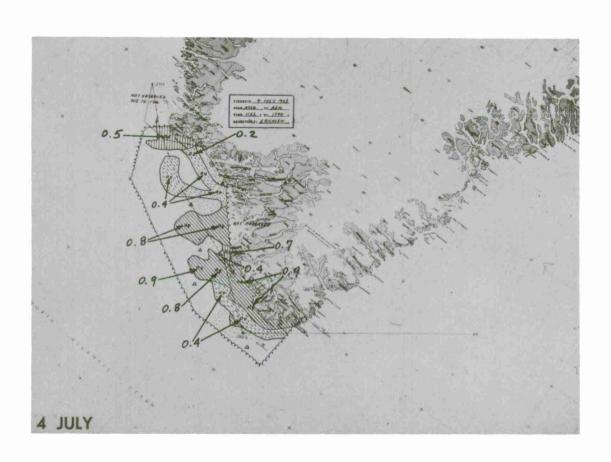


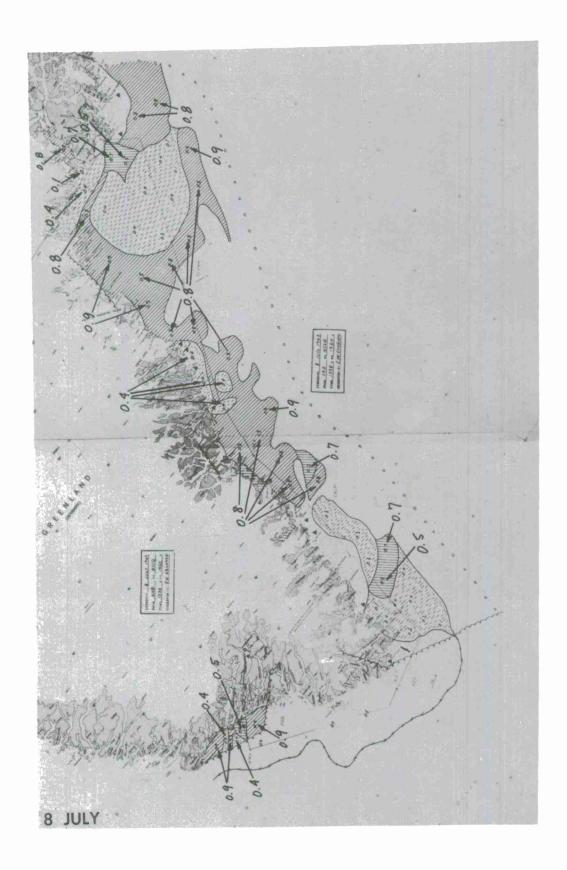


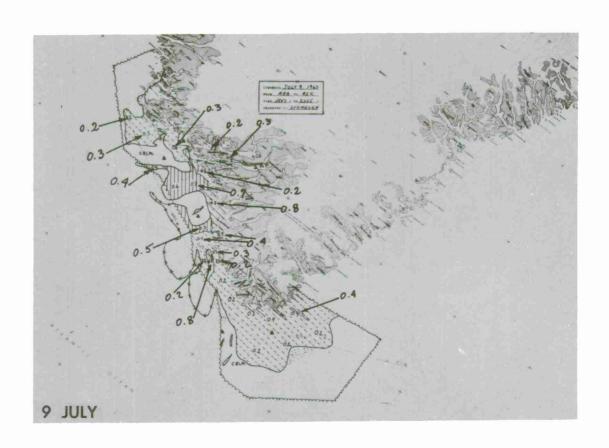


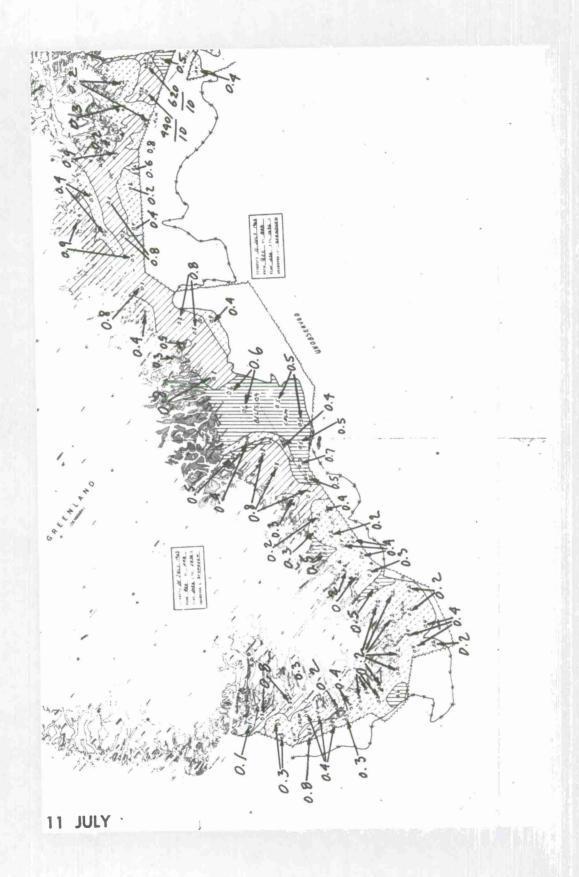


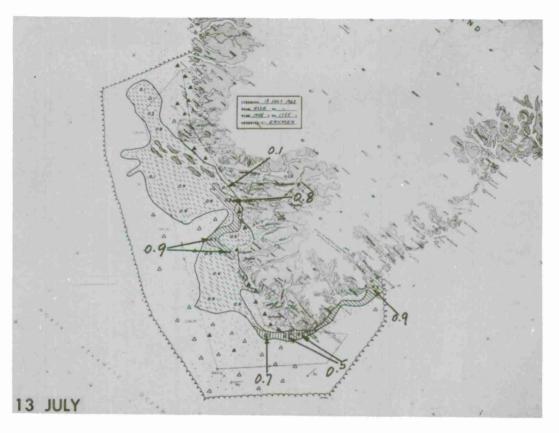


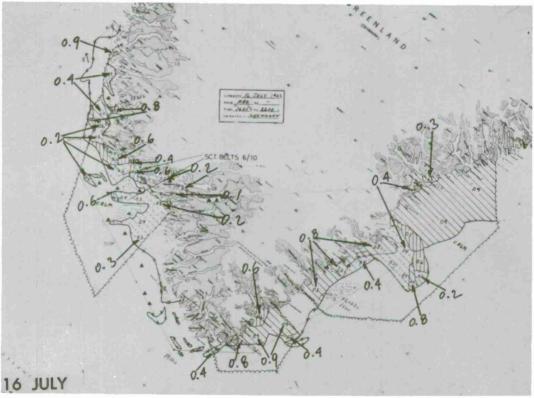


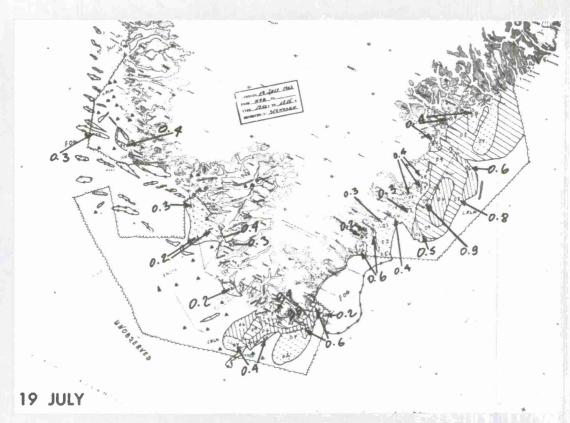


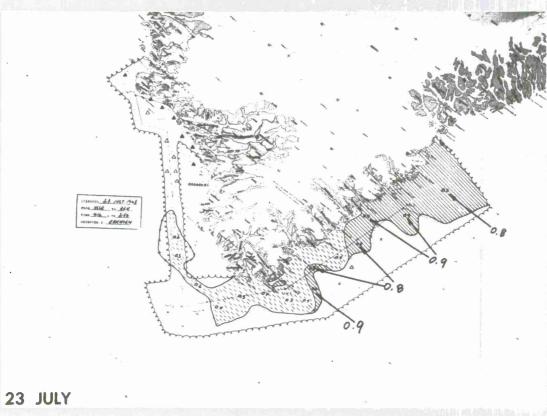


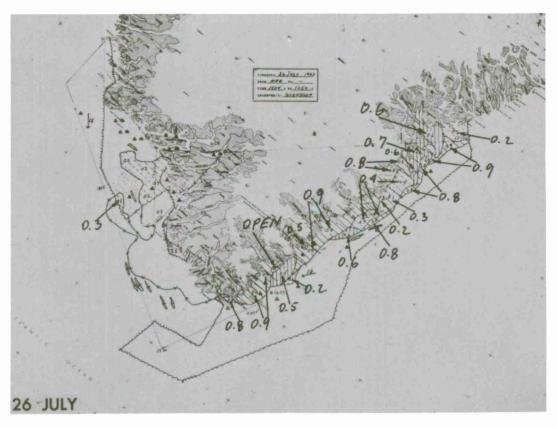


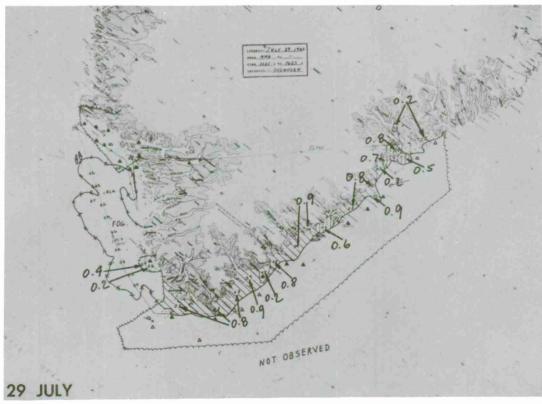


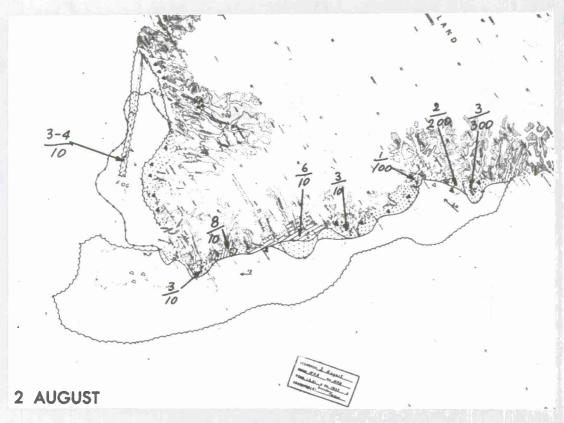


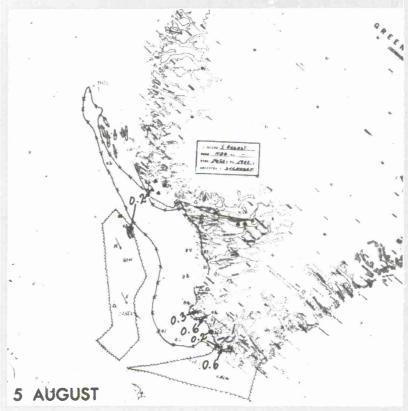


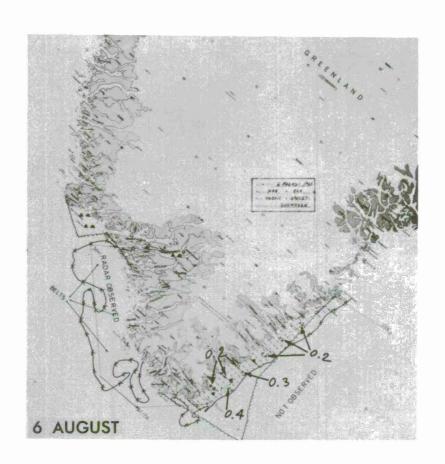


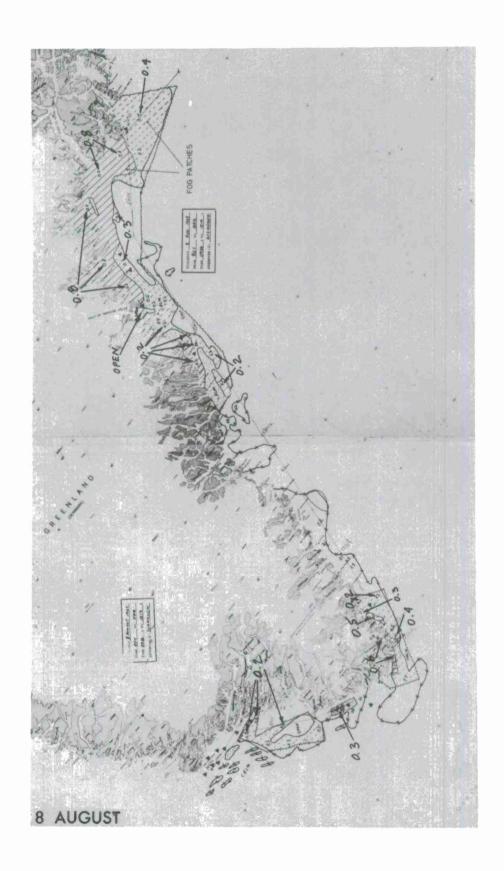


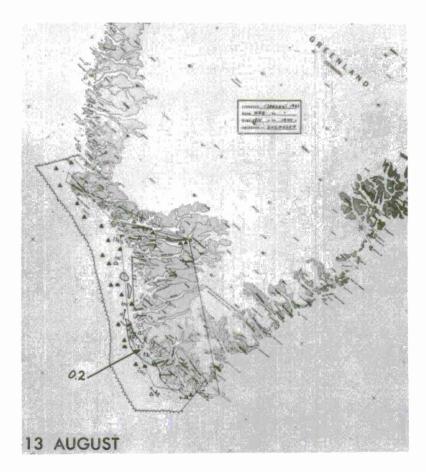


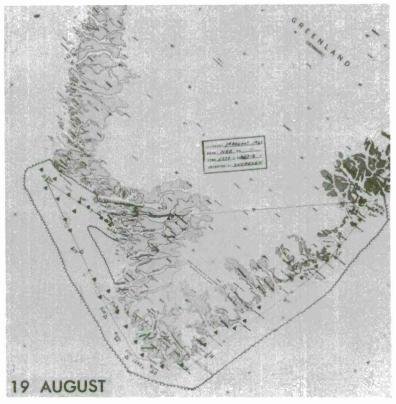


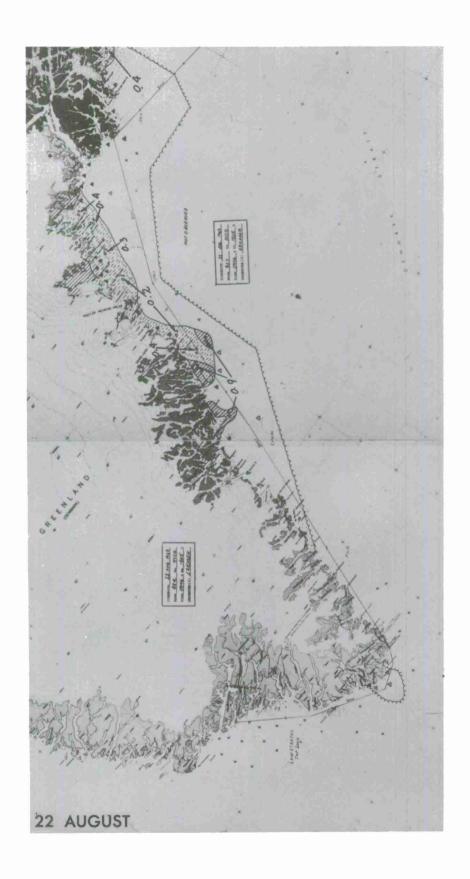




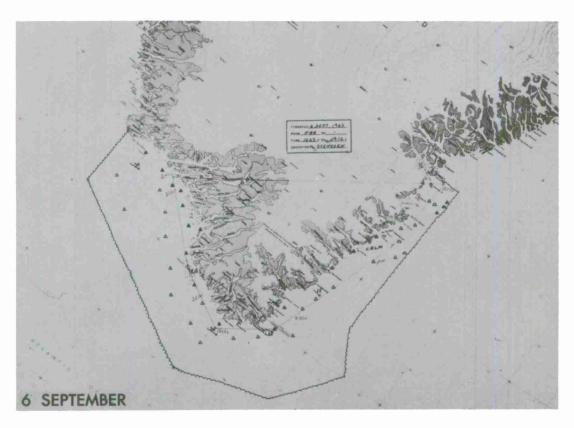


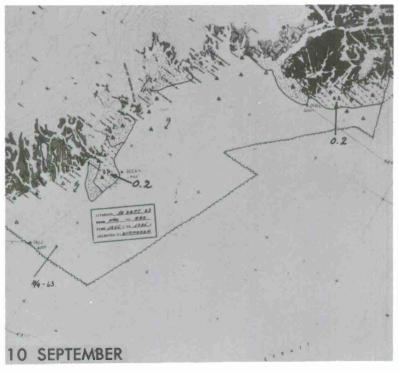


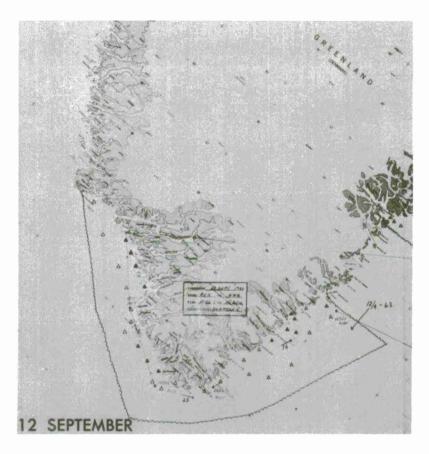


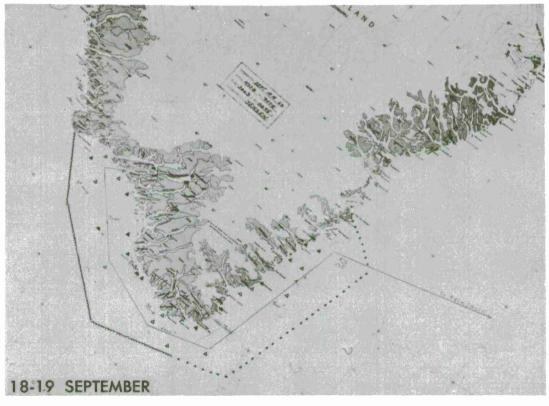




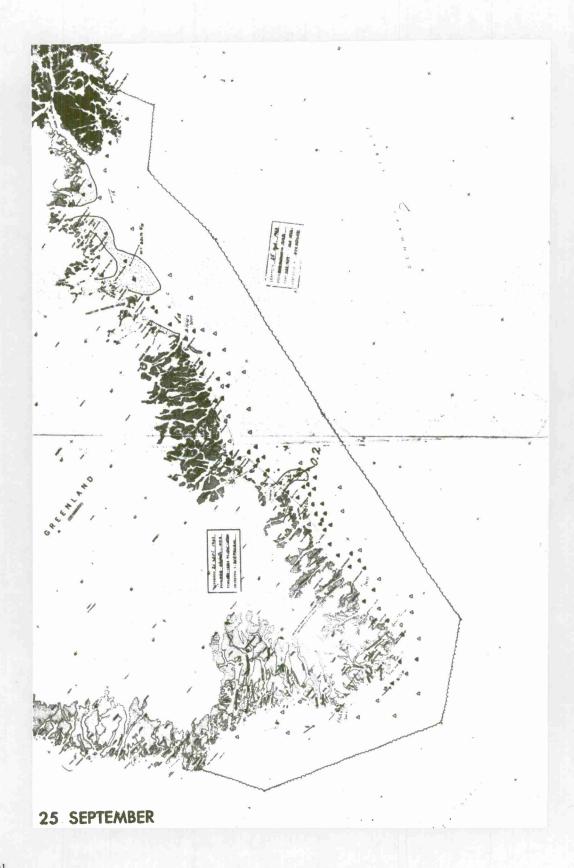


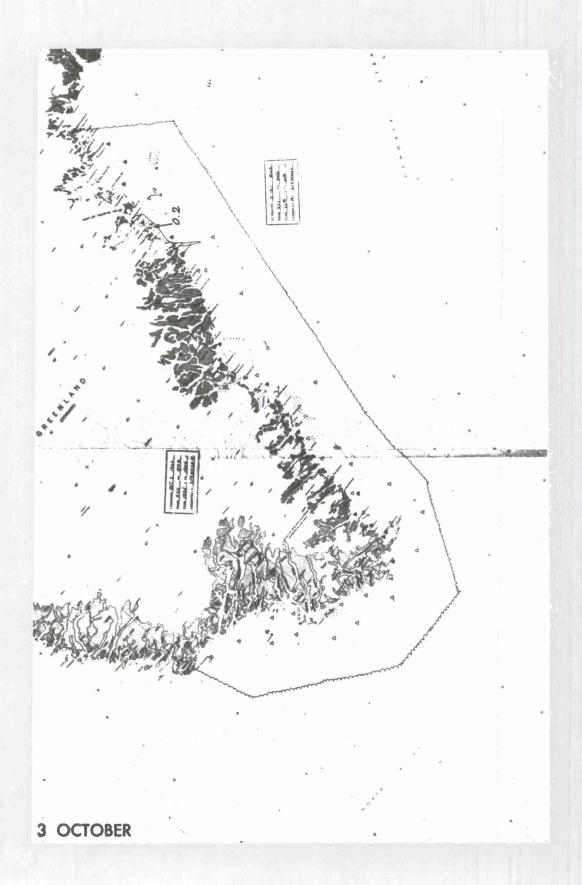




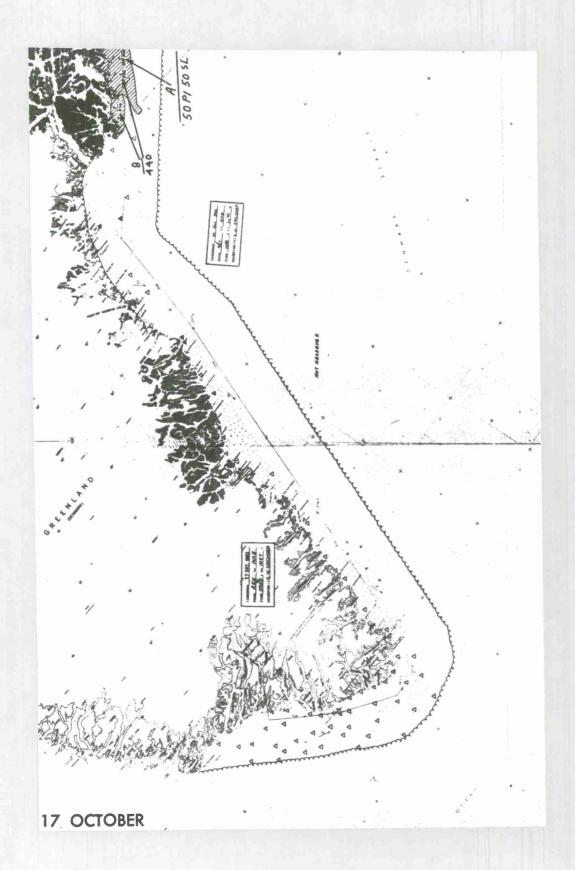


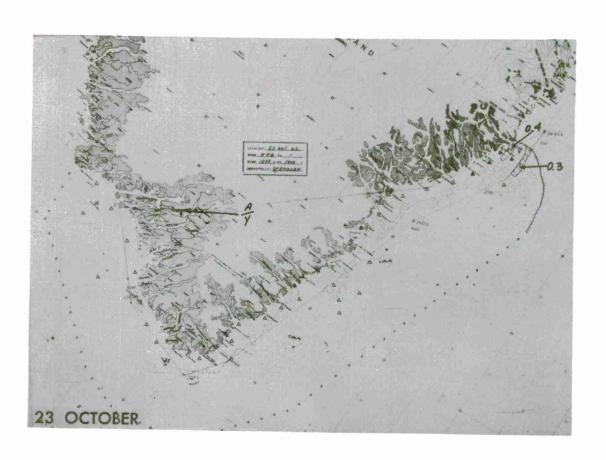


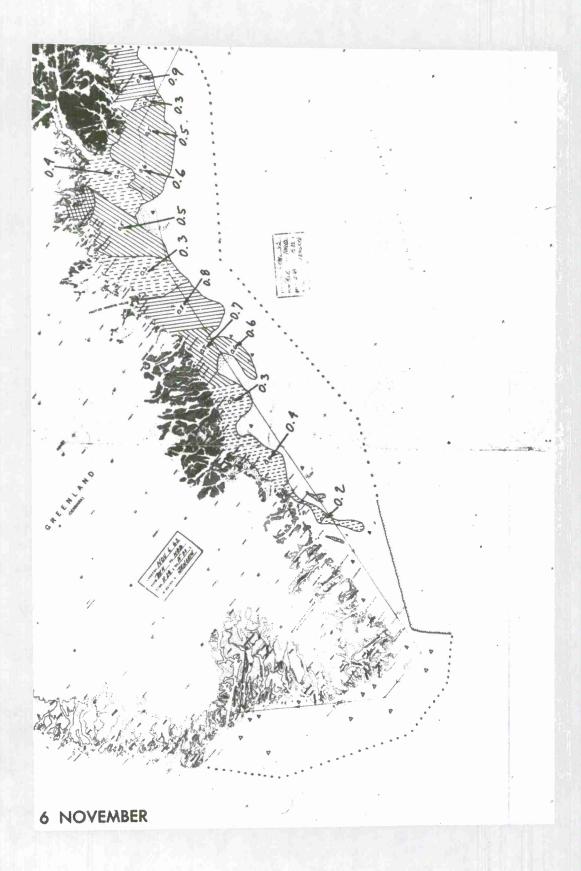


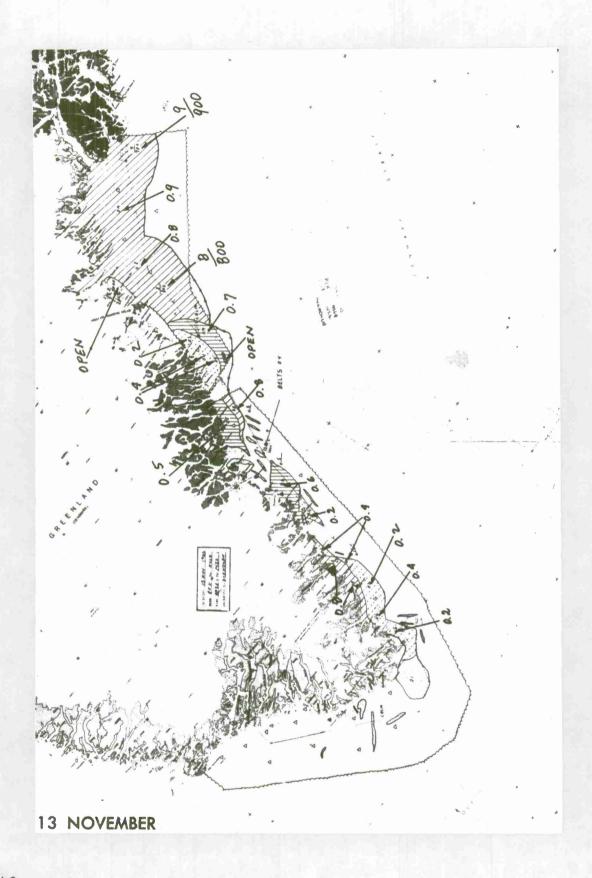


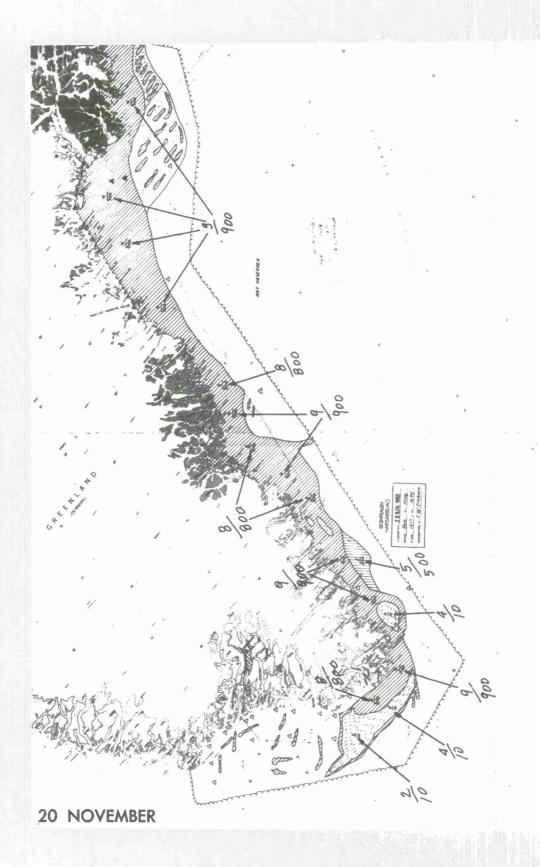


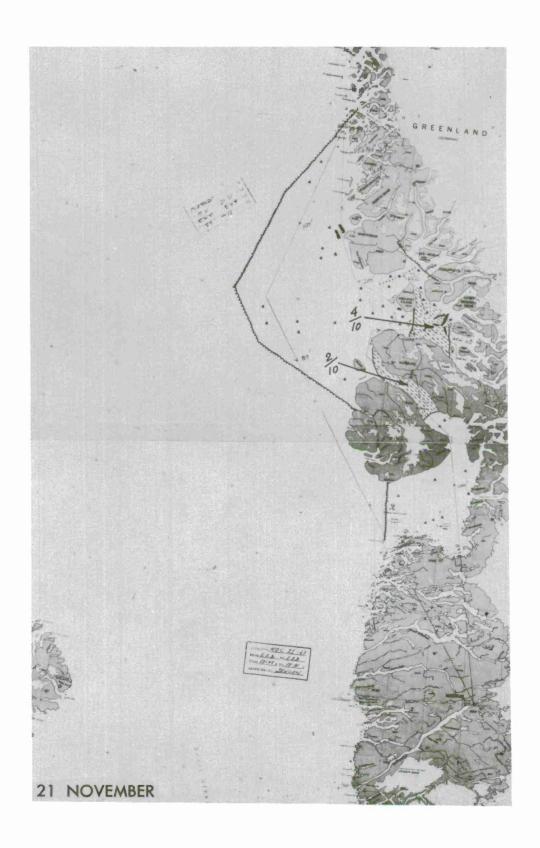


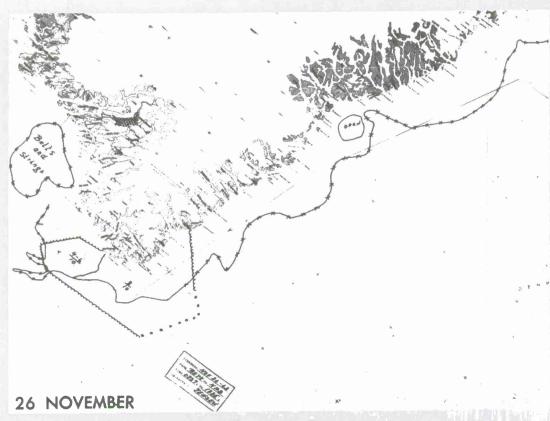


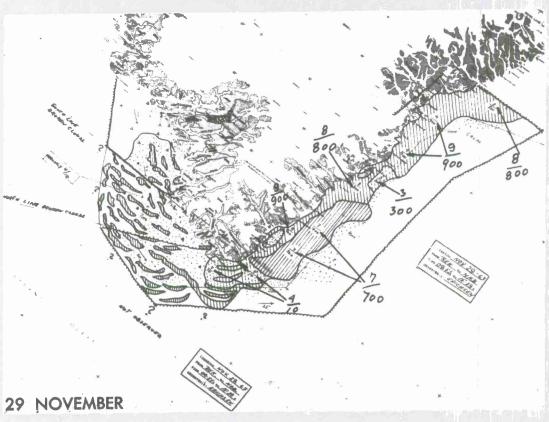


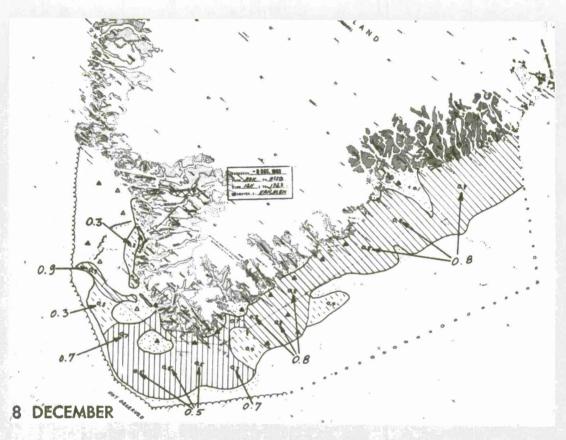


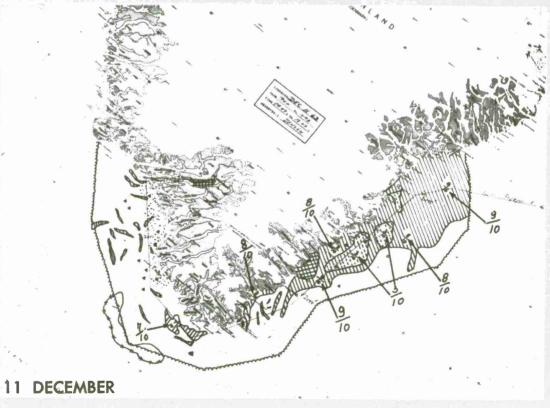


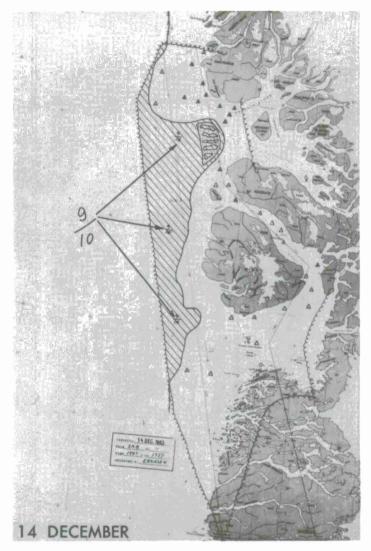


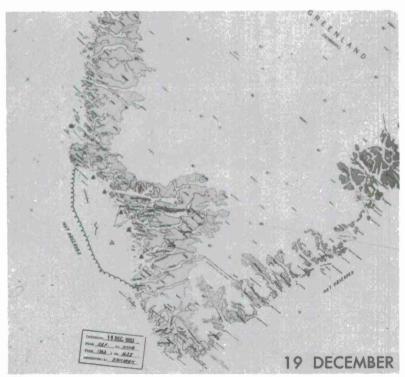


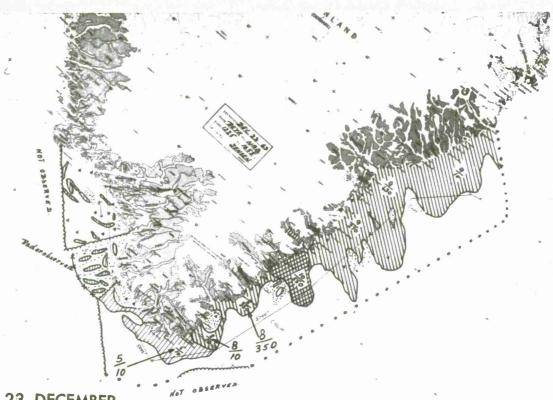




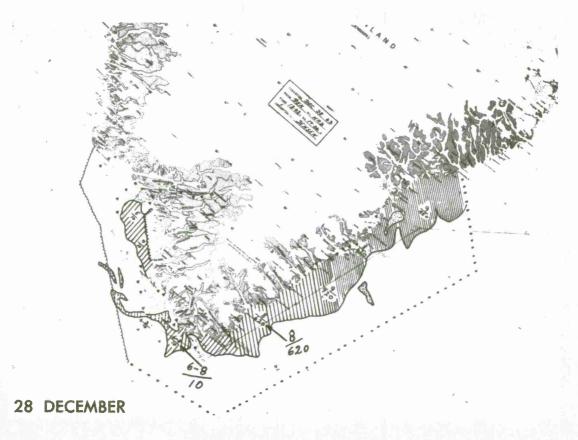




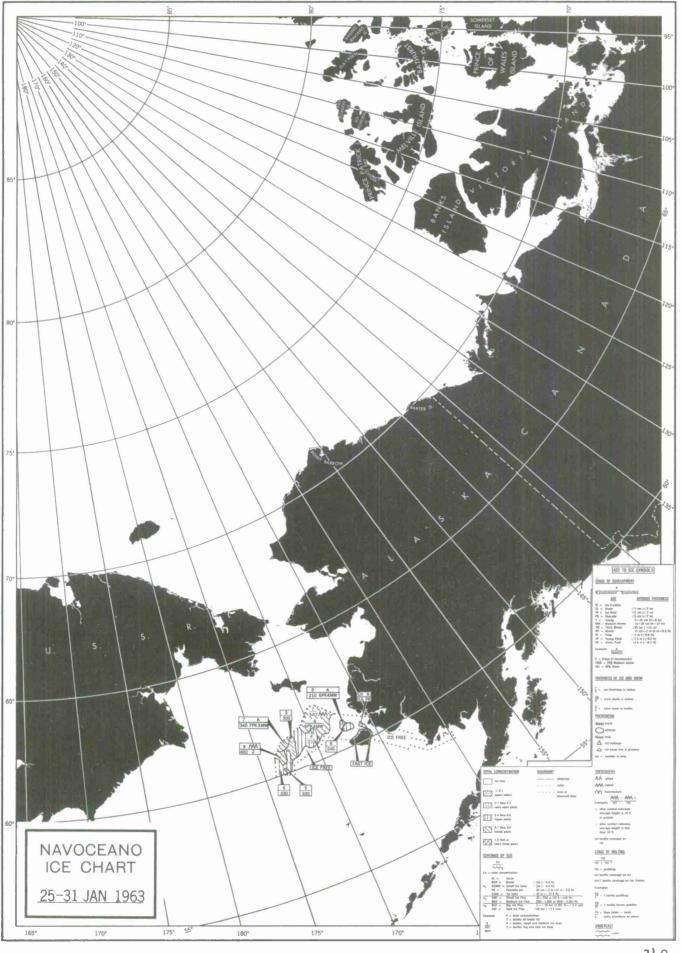


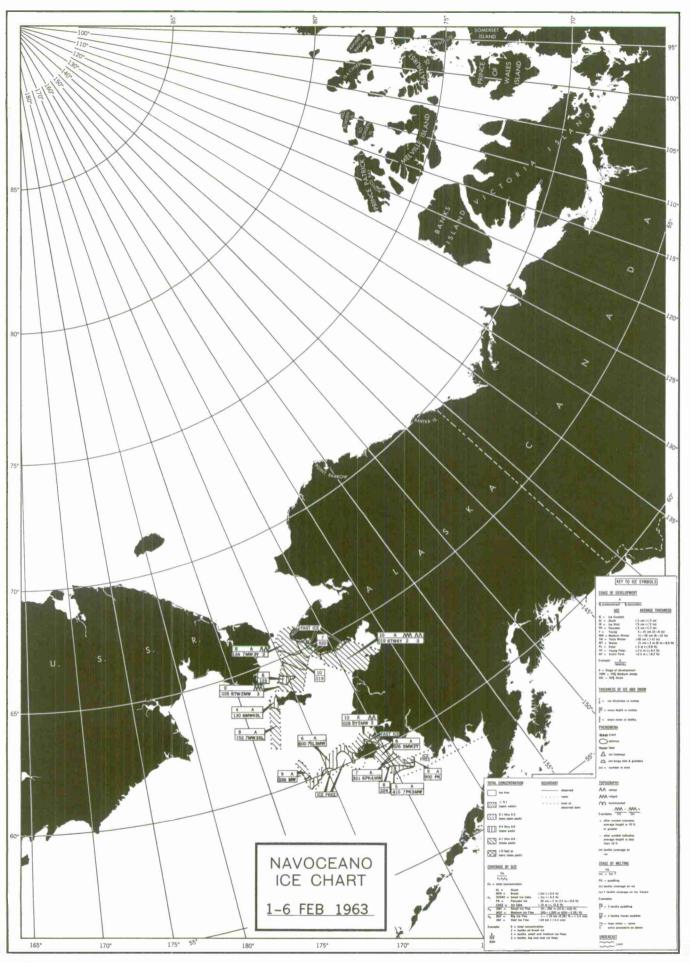


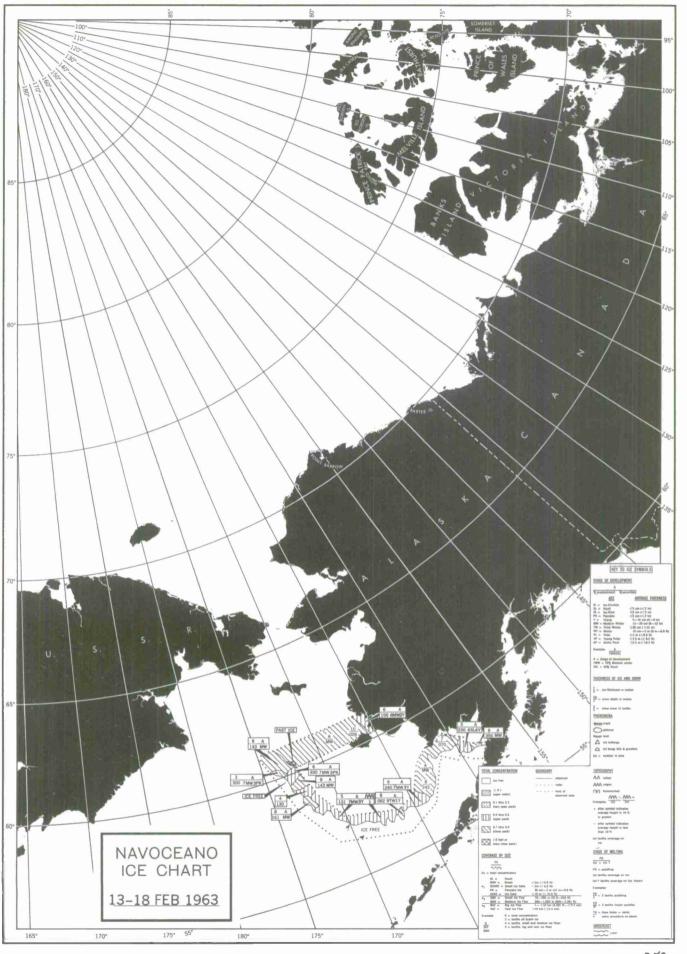
23 DECEMBER

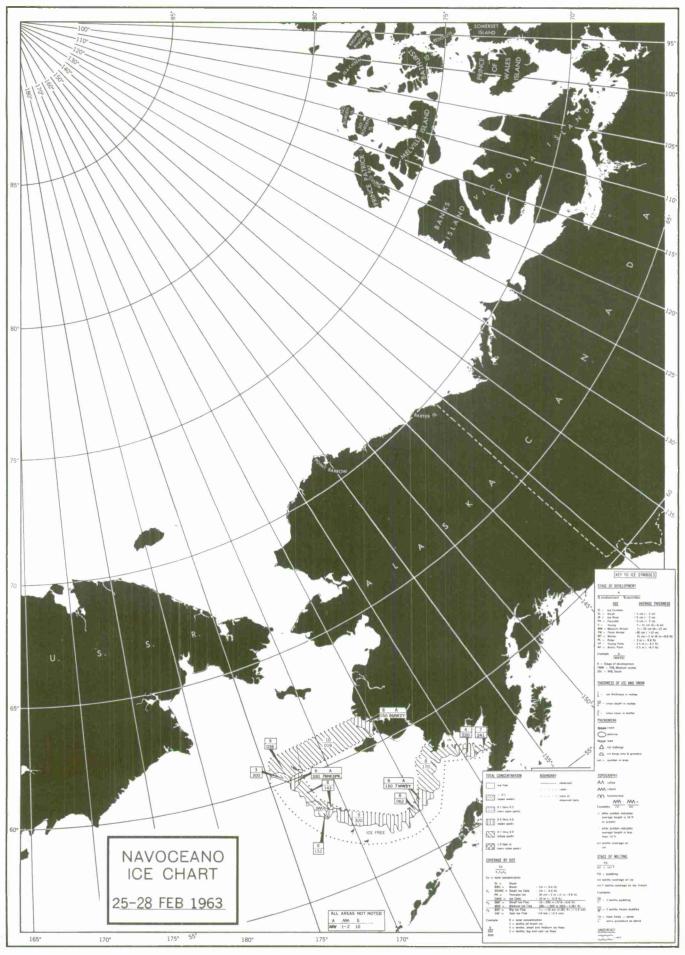


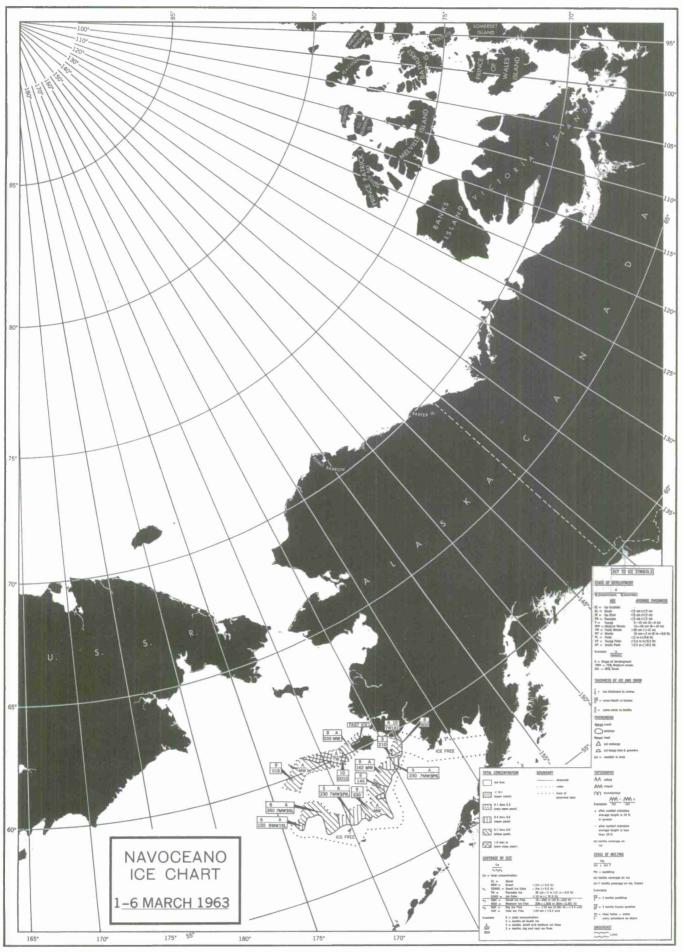
## APPENDIX C WESTERN ARCTIC ICE CHARTS

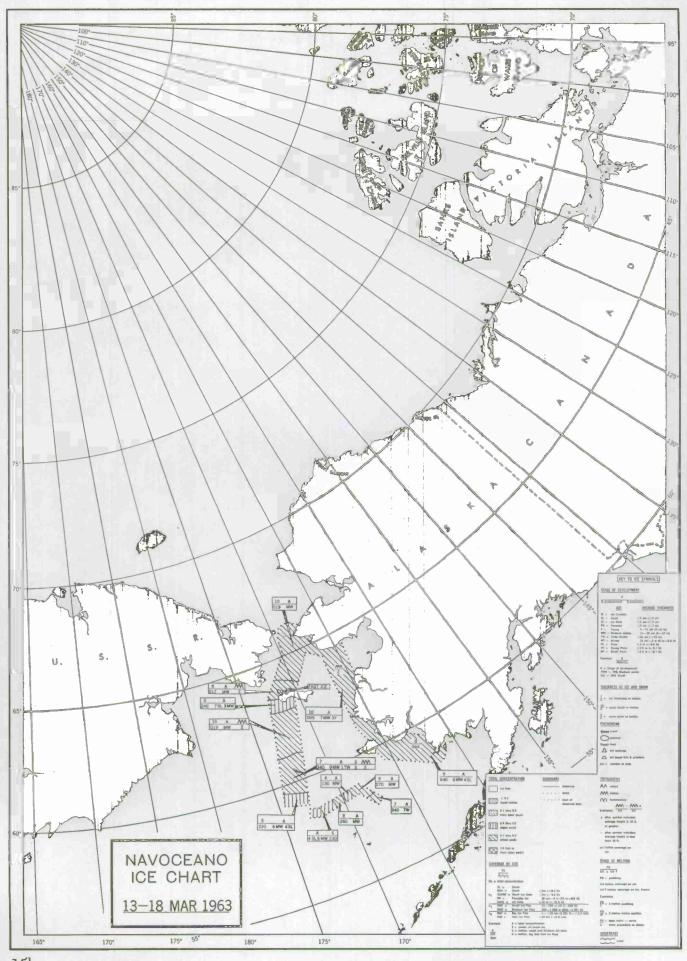


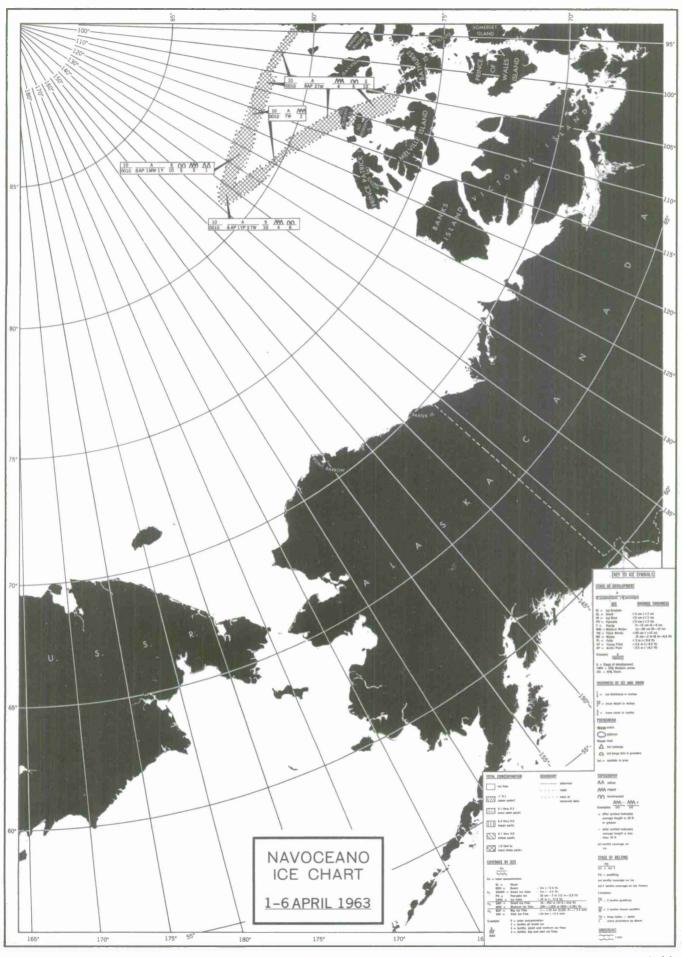


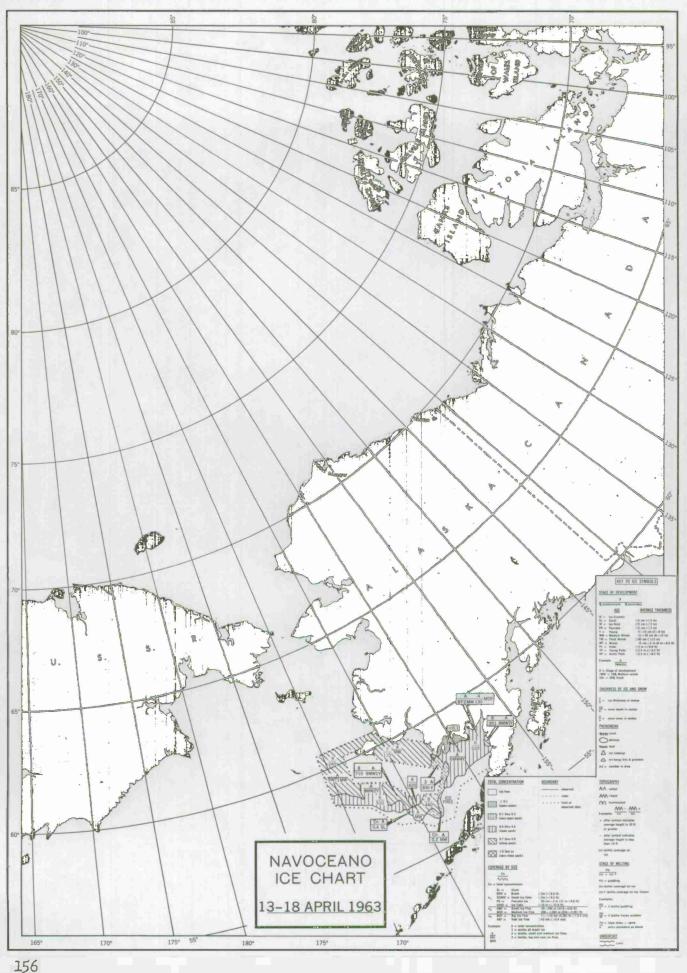


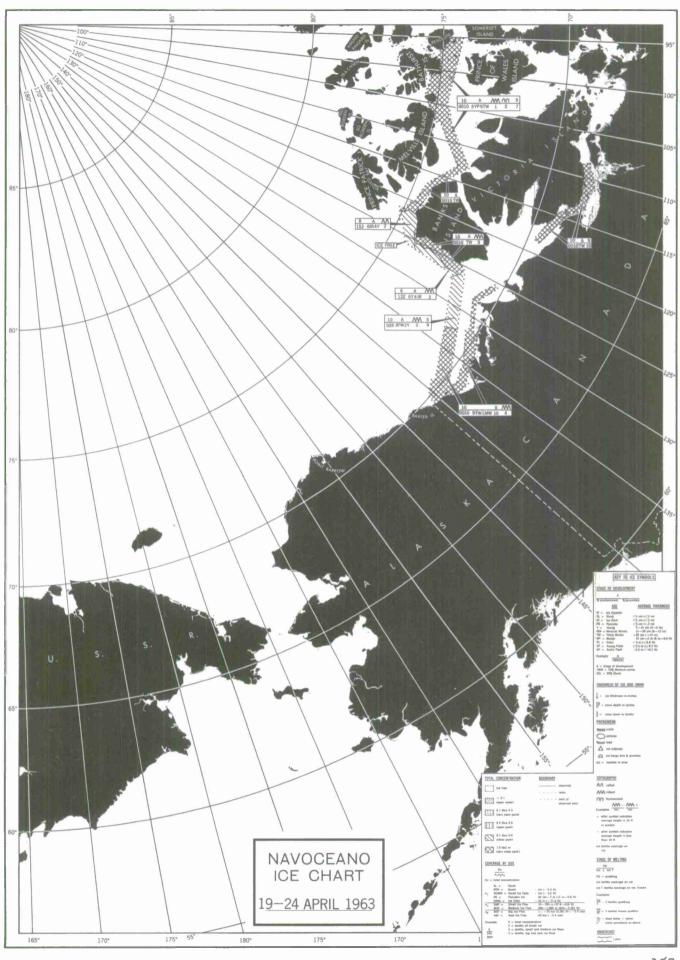


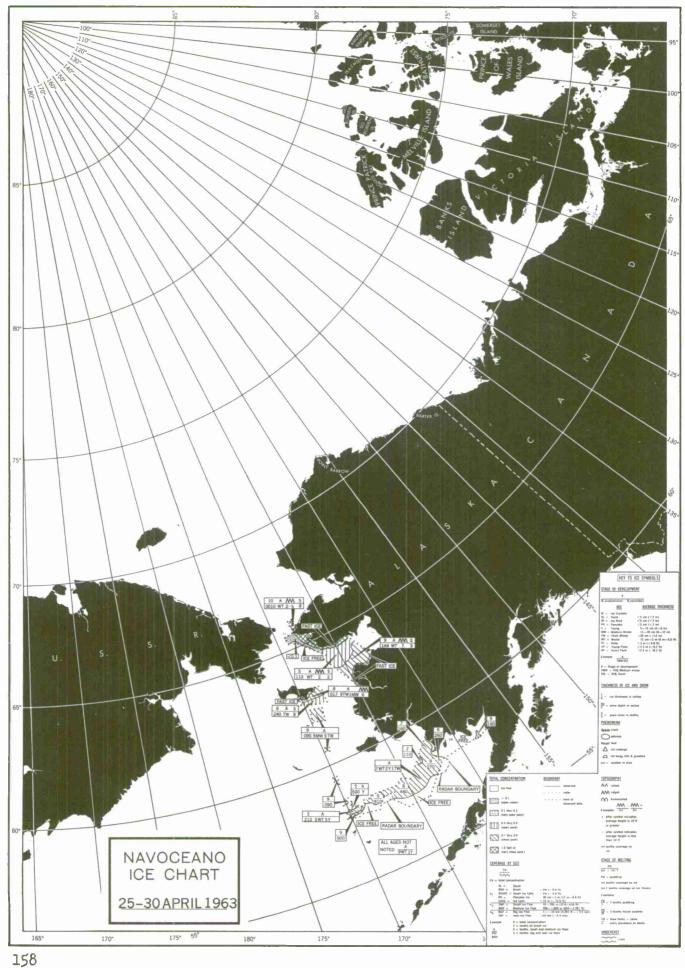


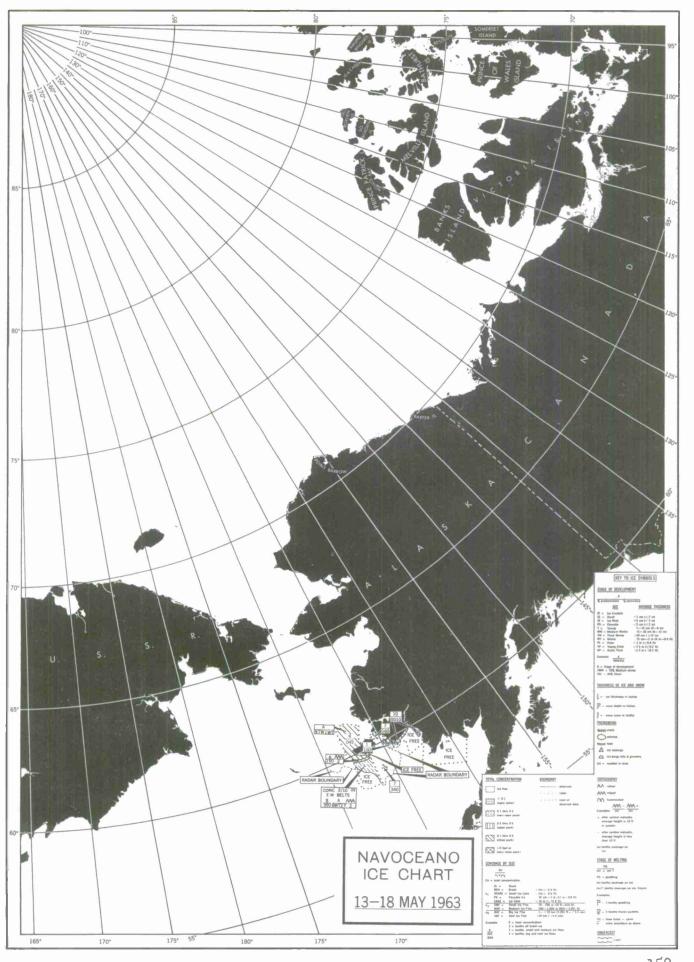


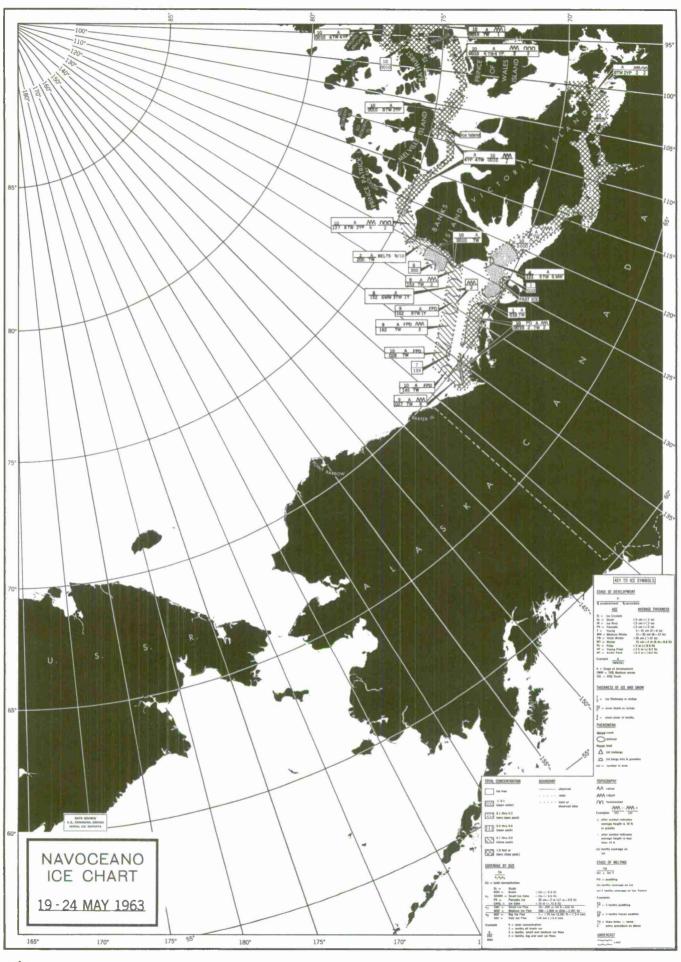


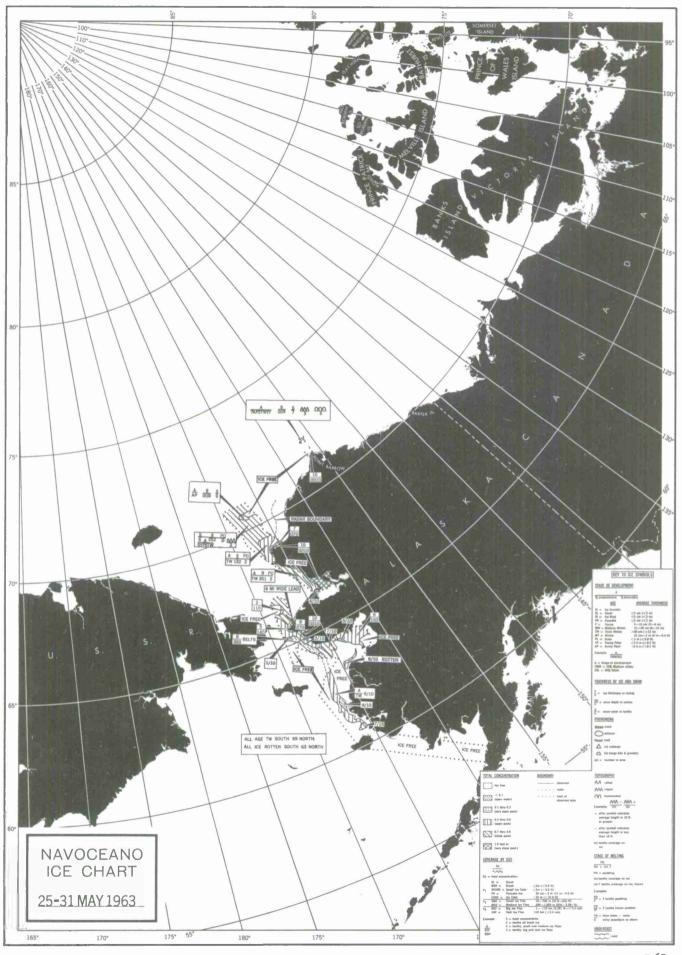


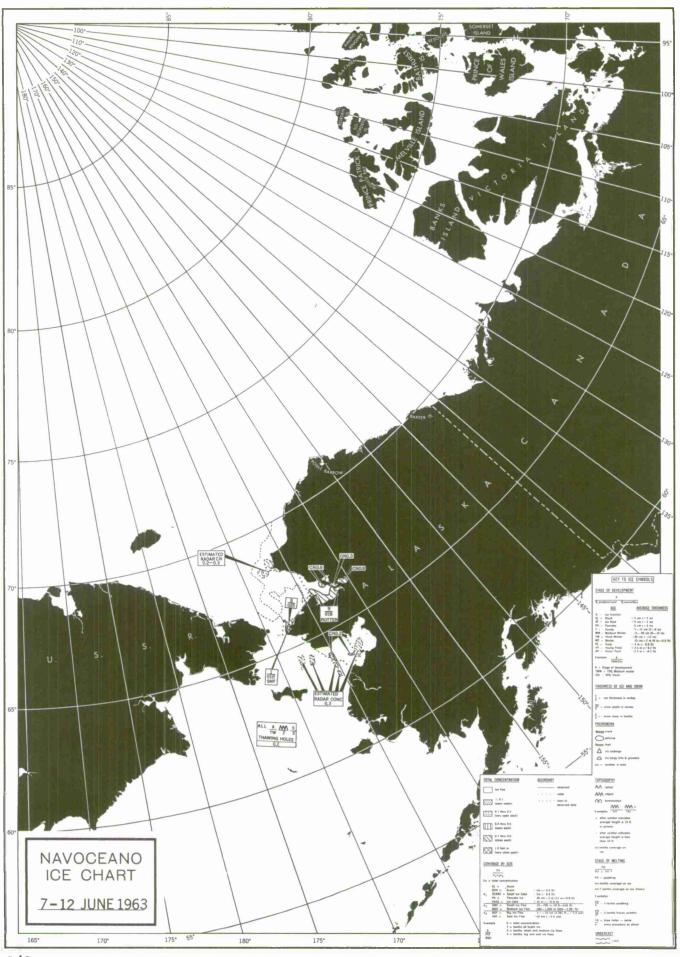


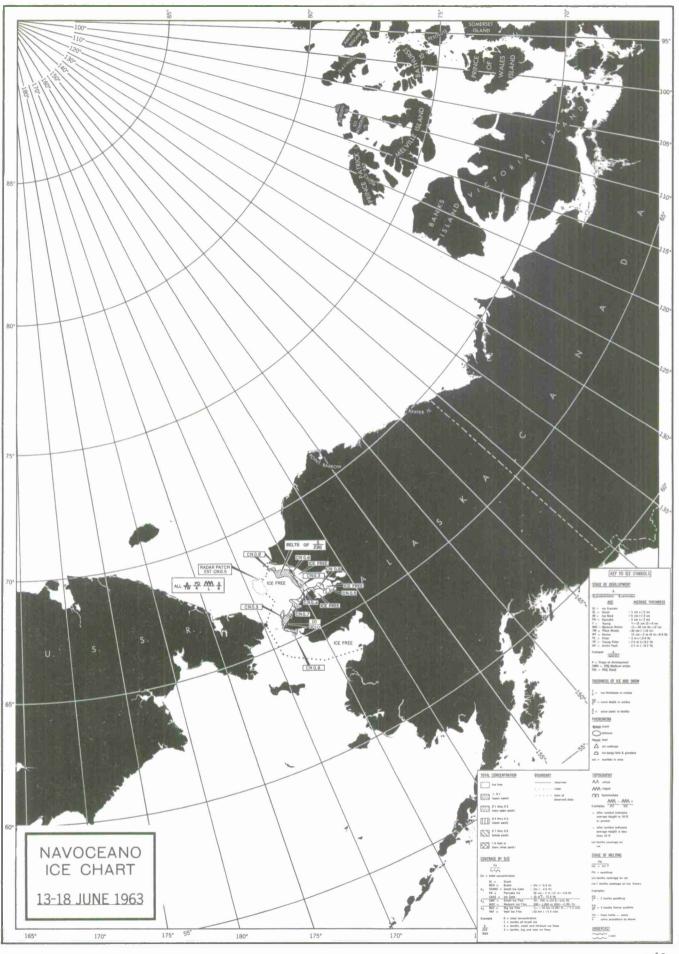


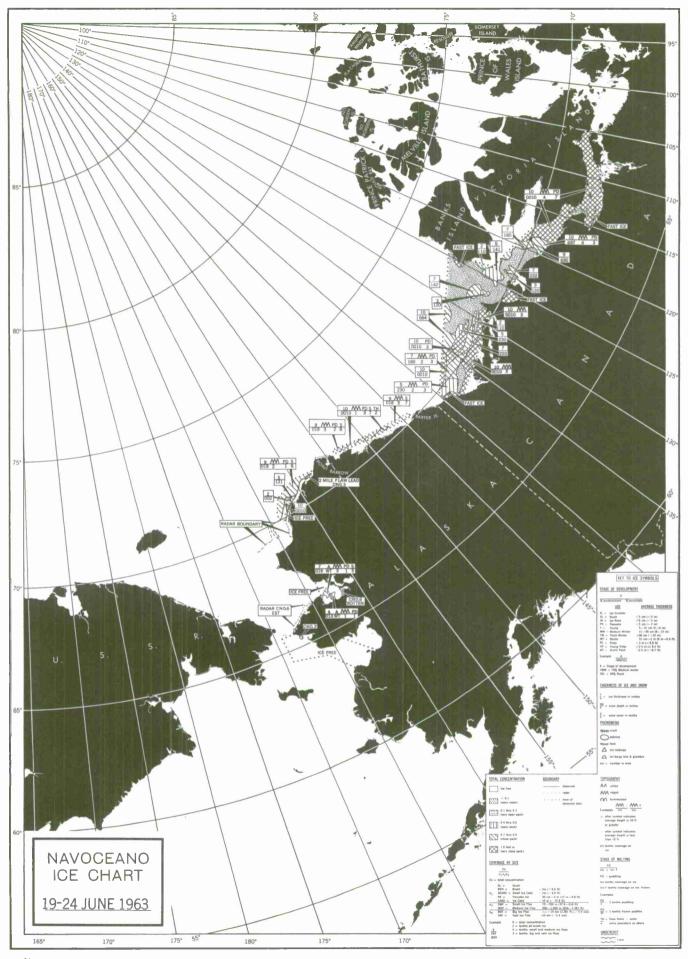


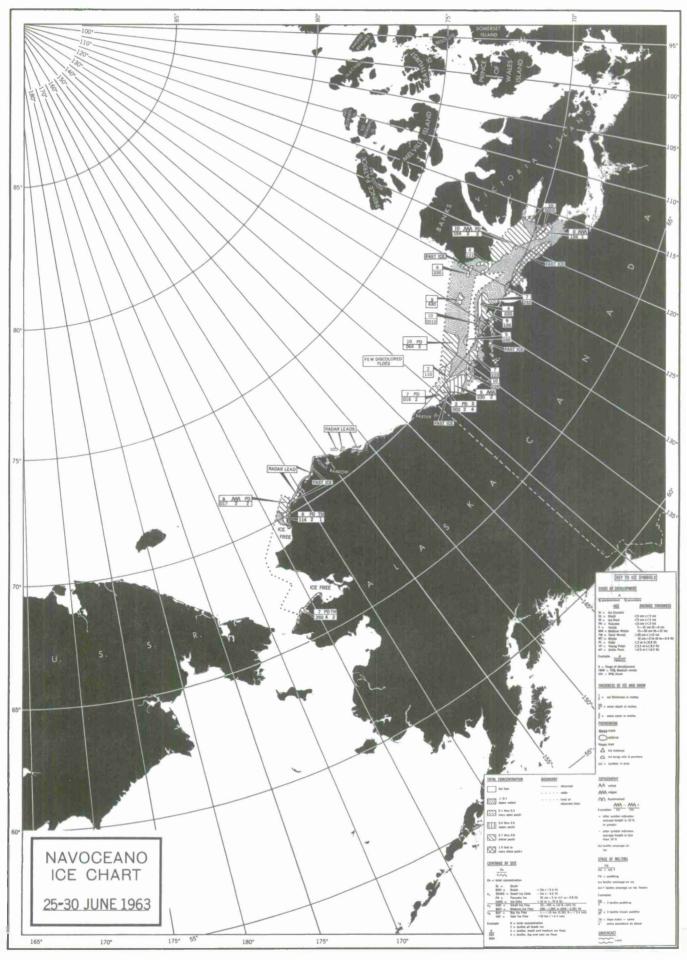


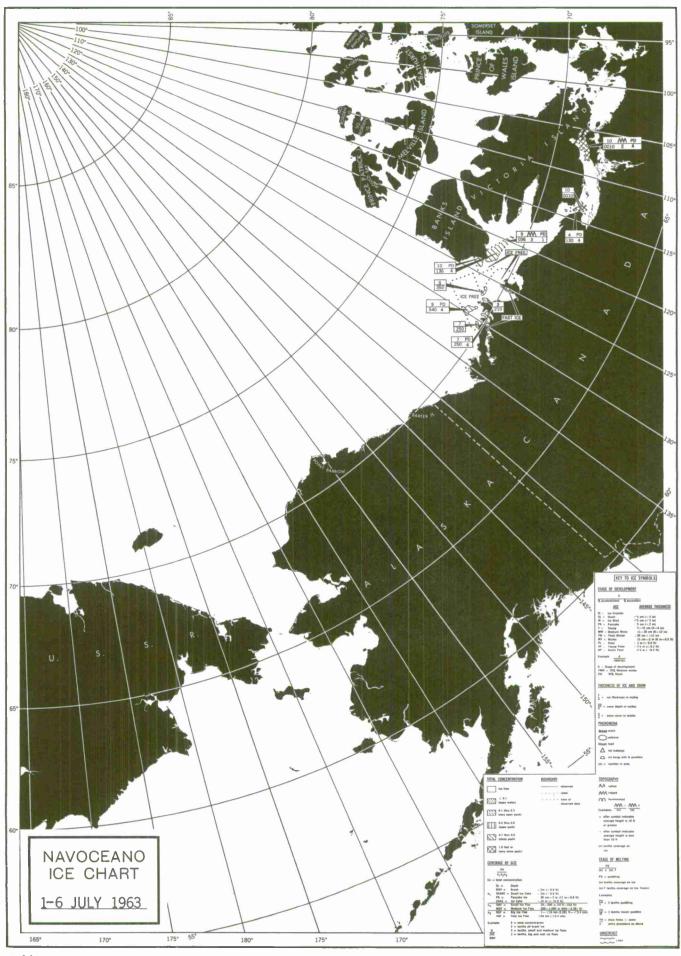


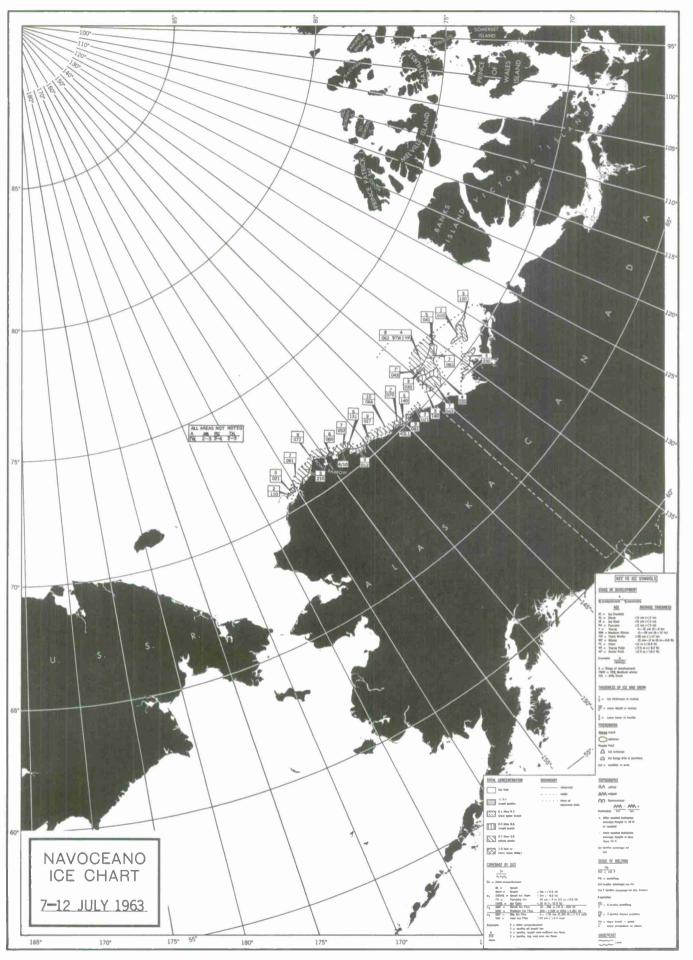


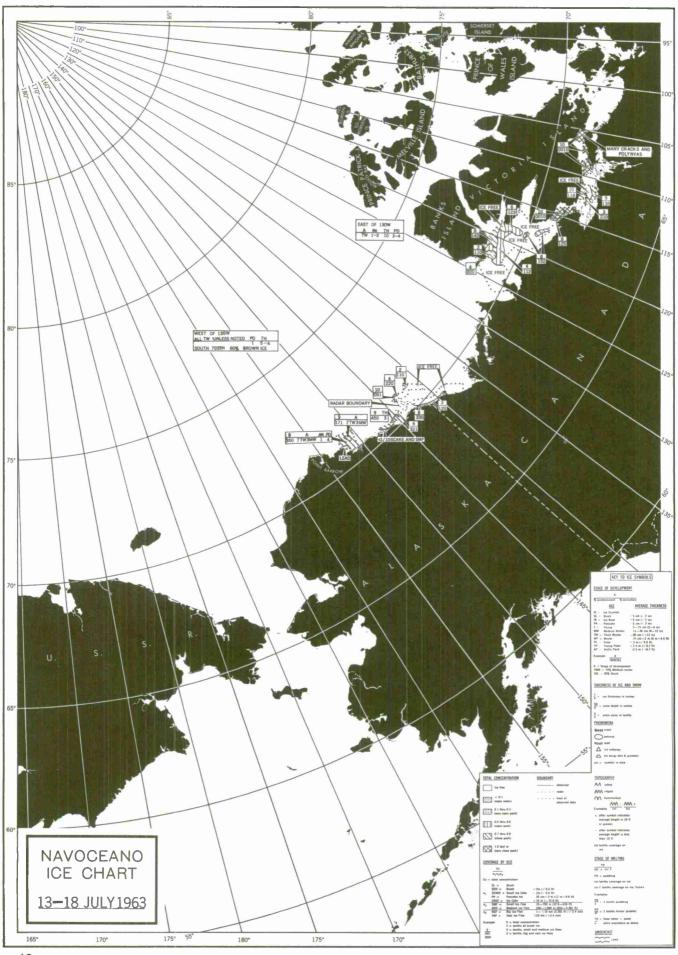


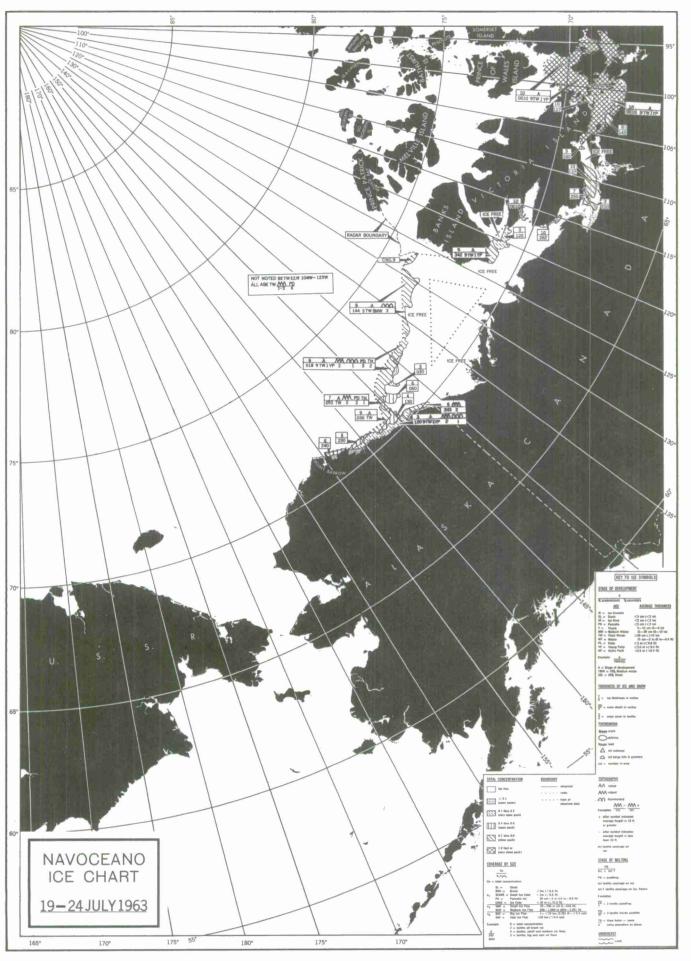


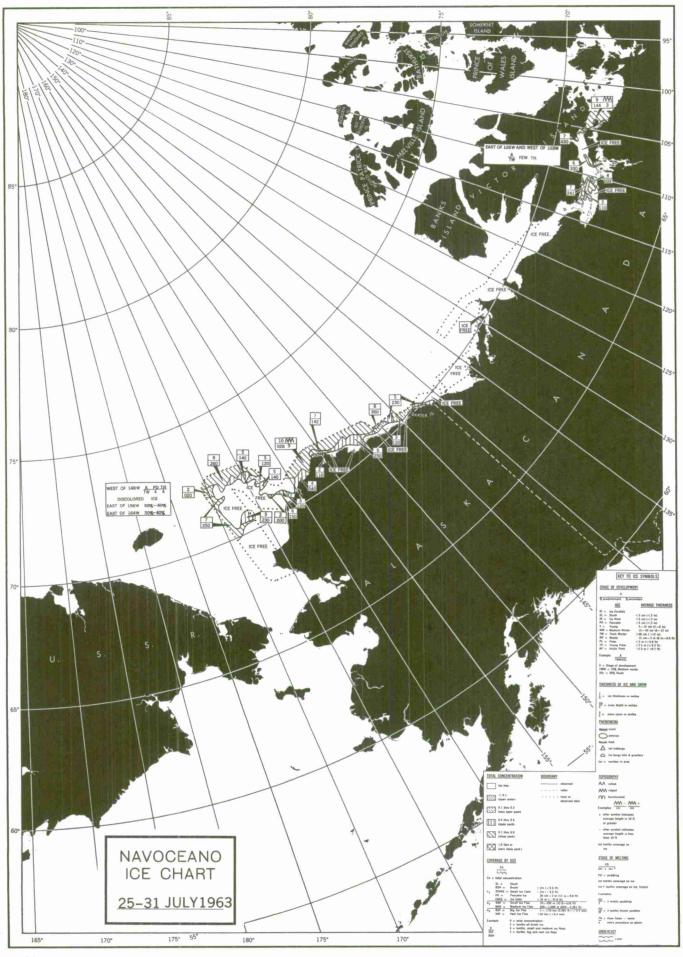


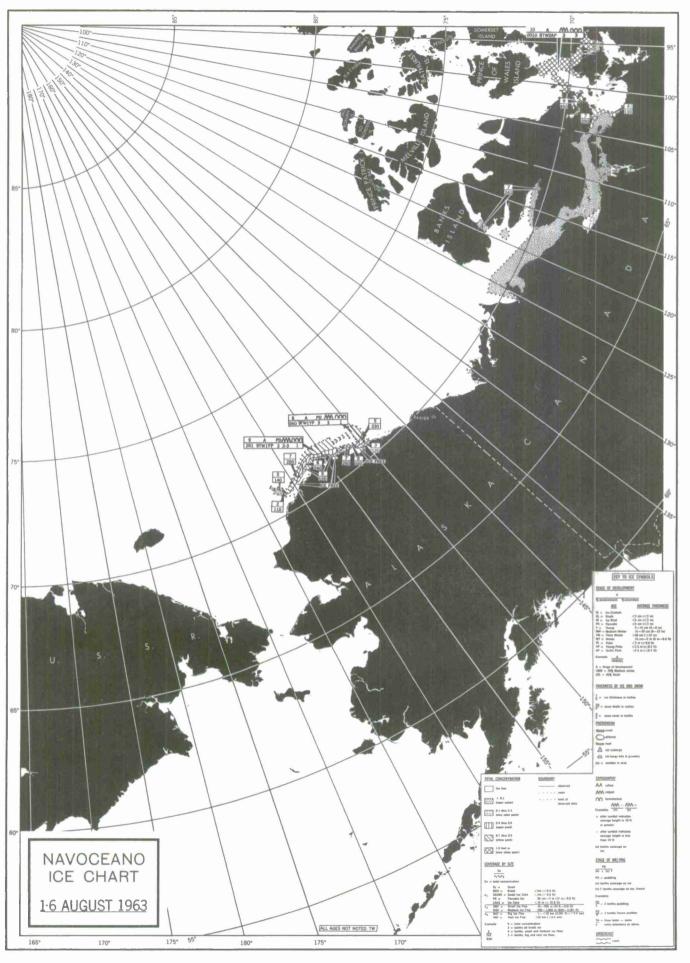


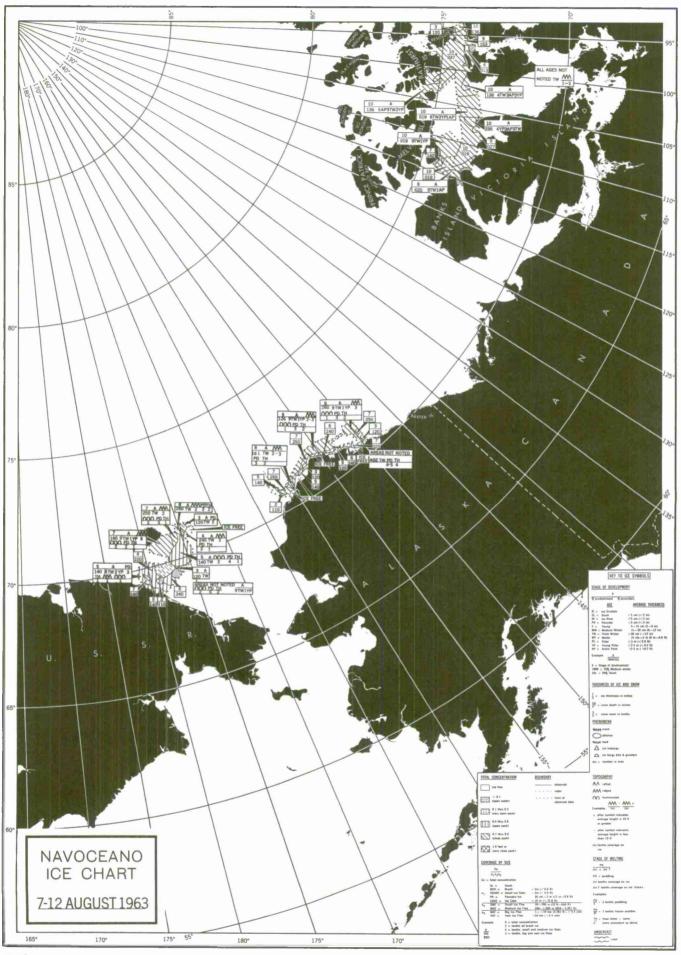


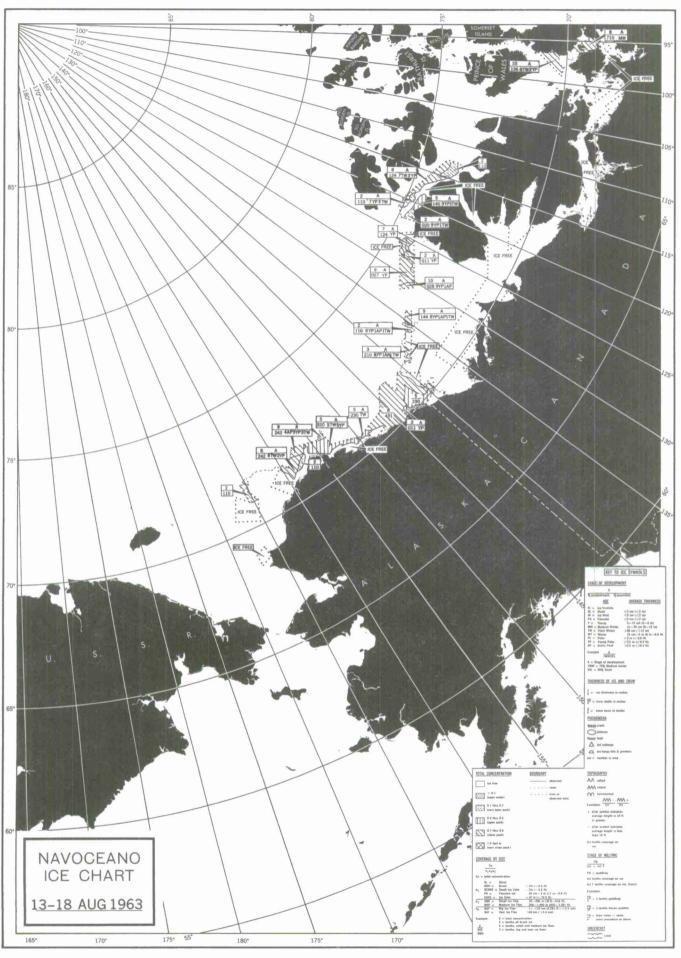


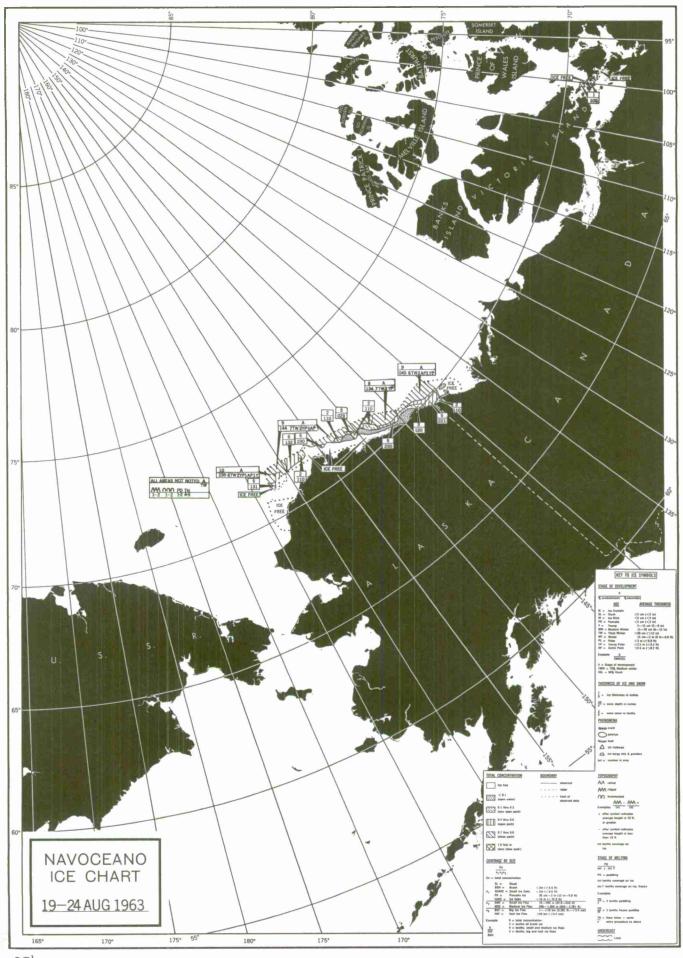


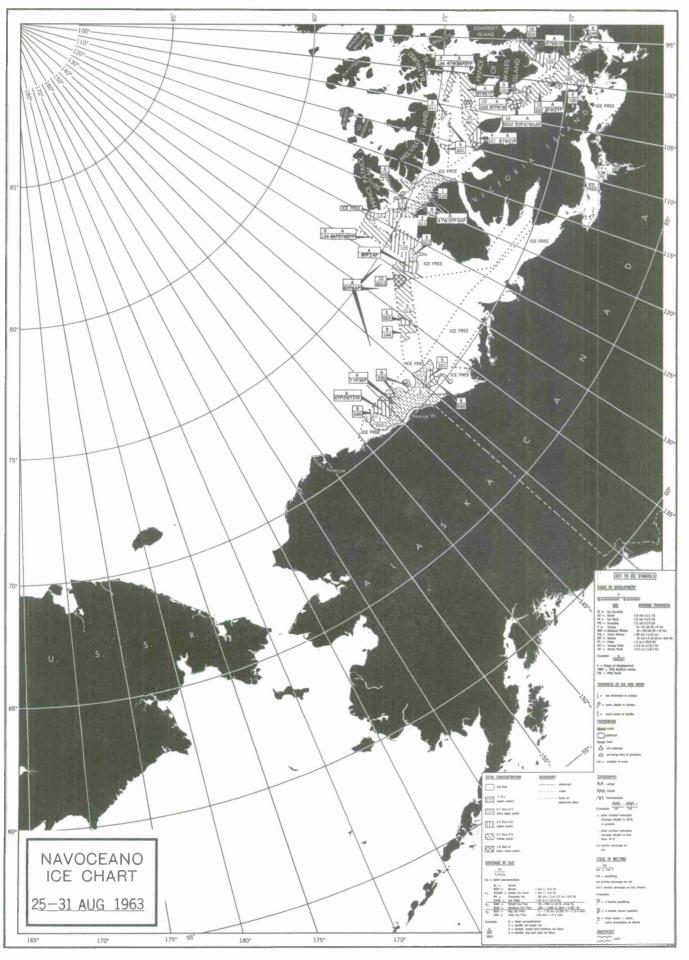


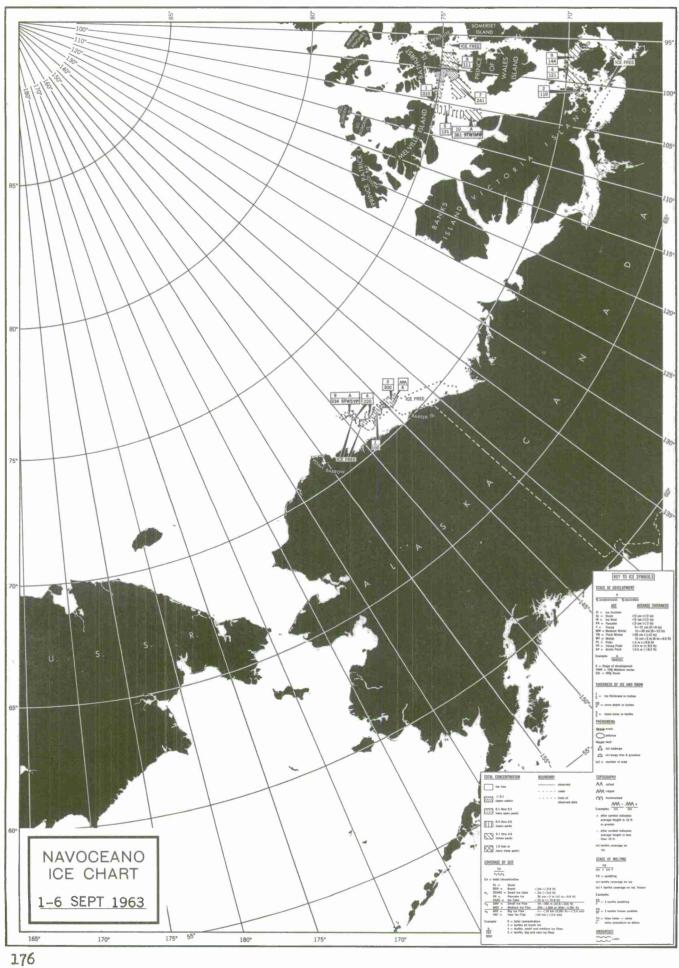


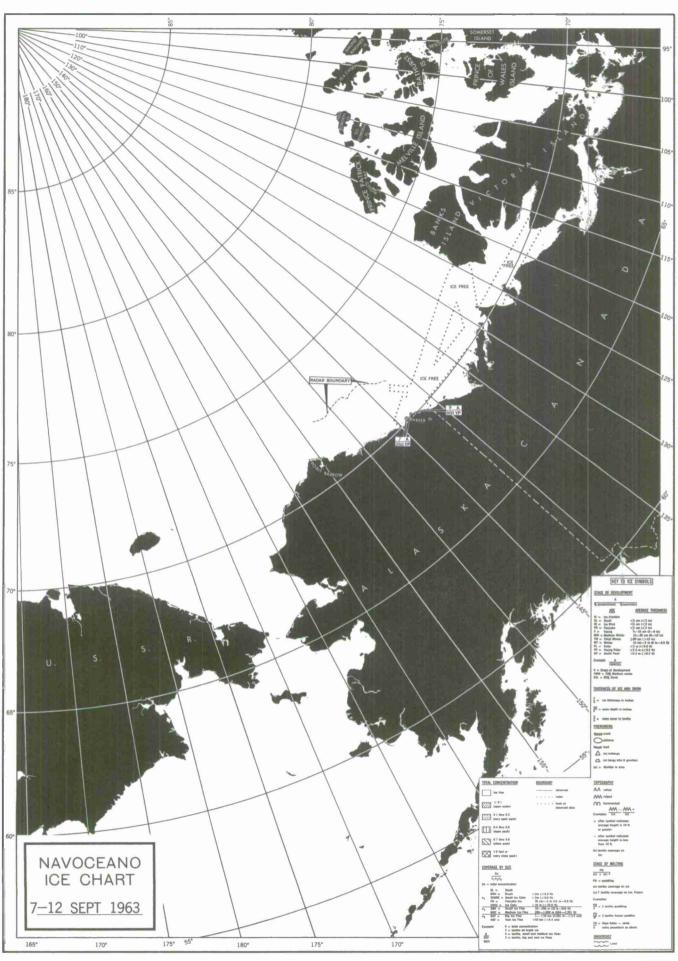


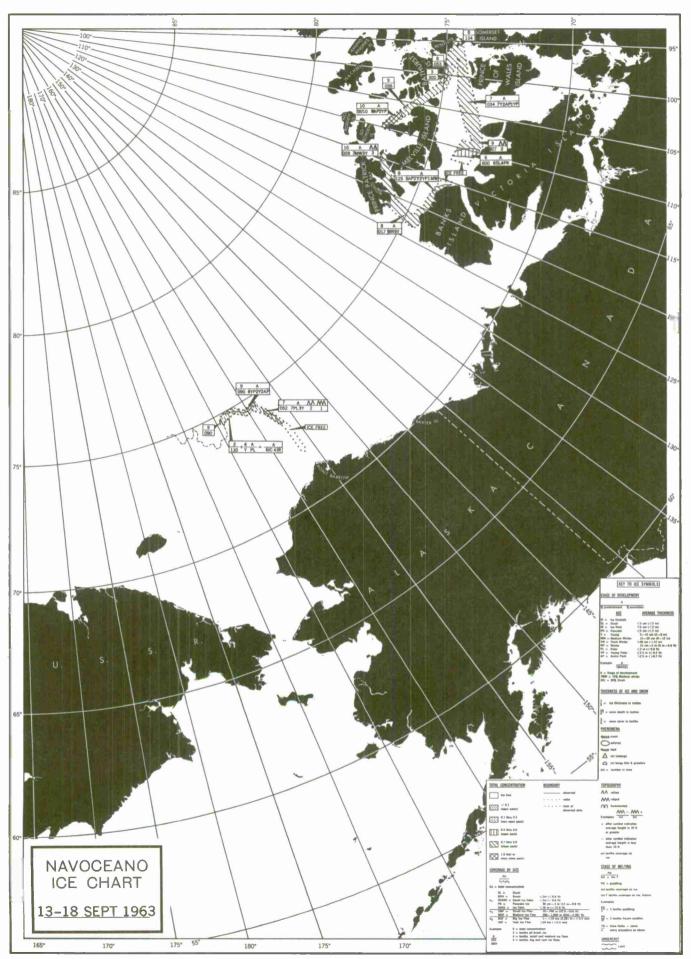


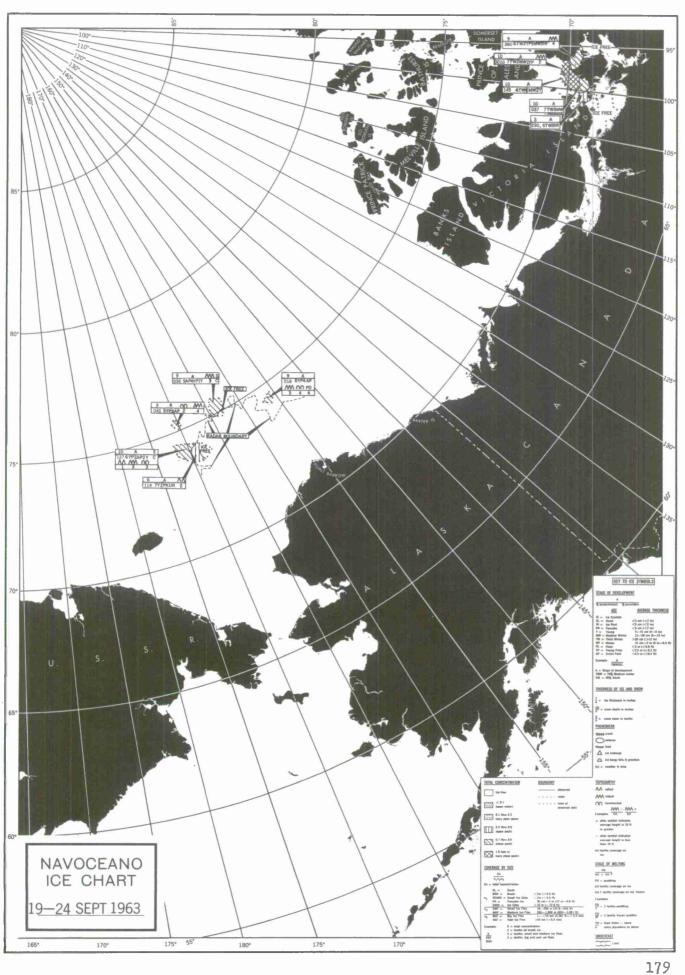


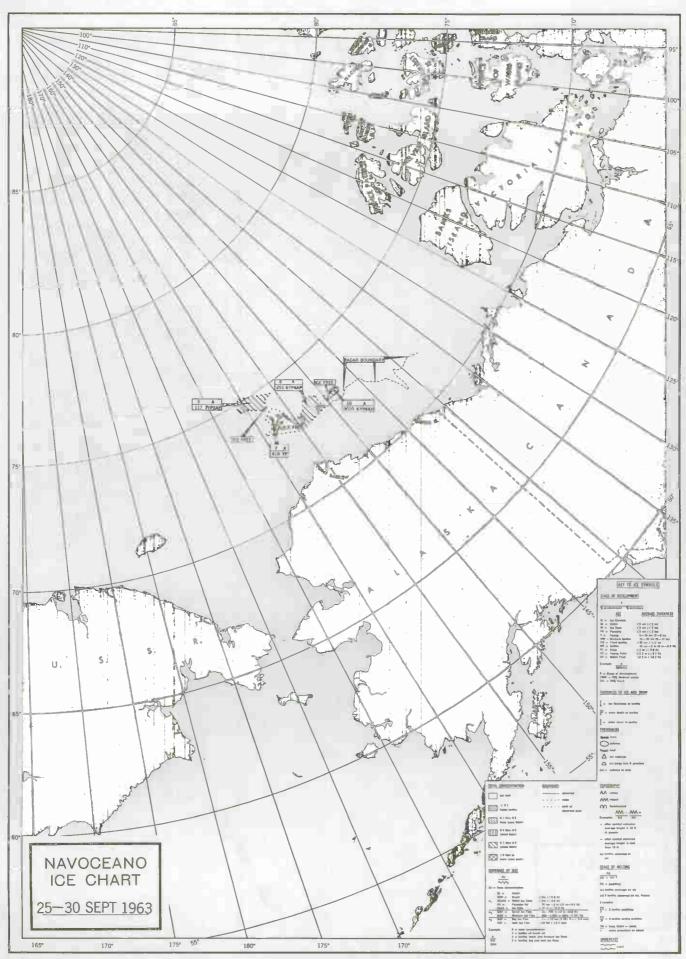


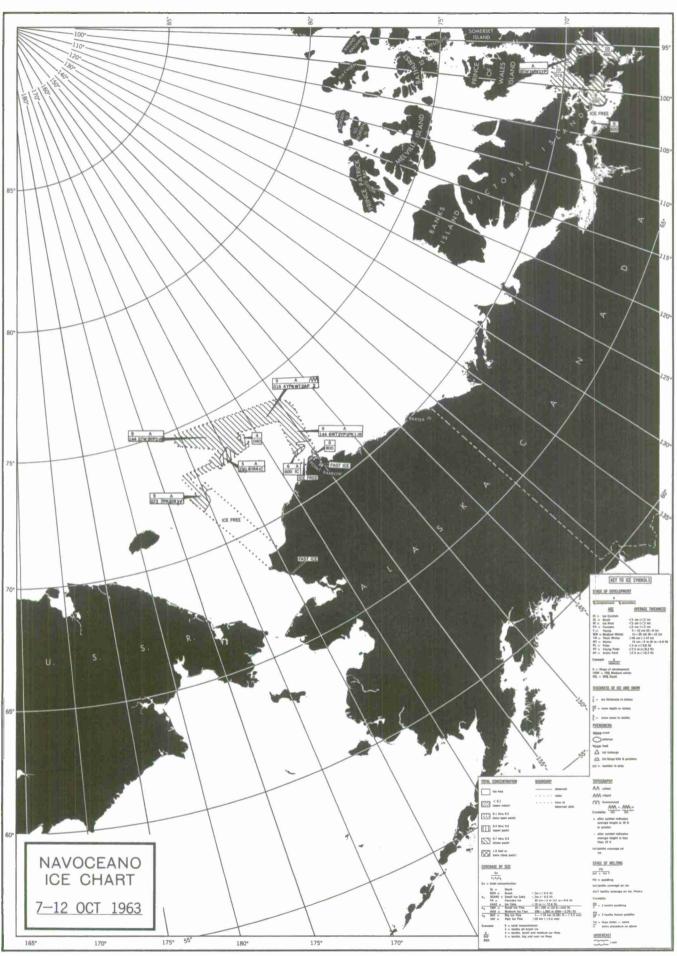


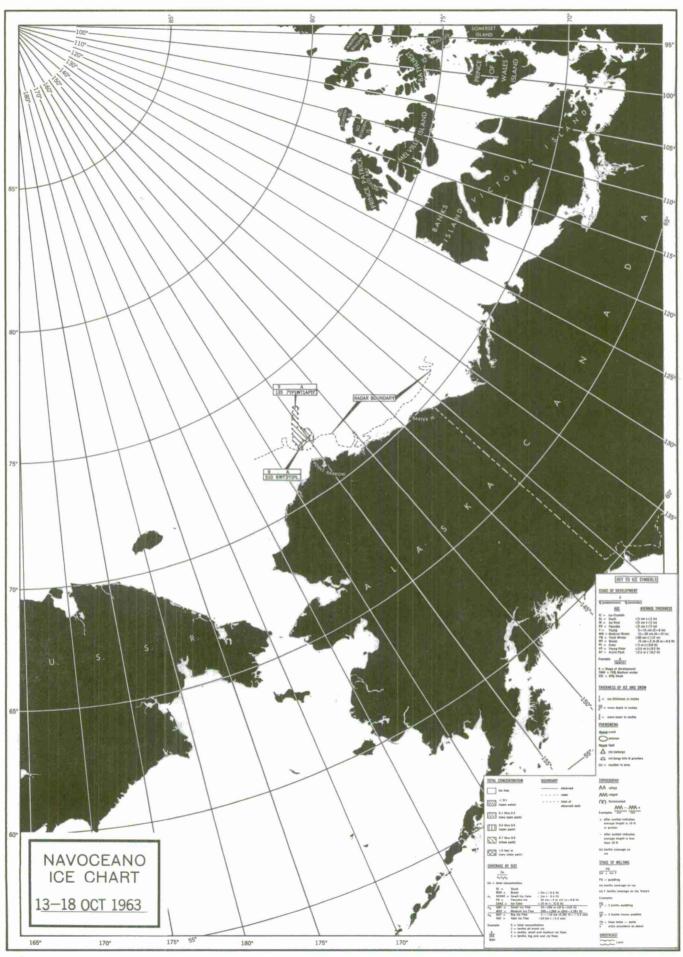


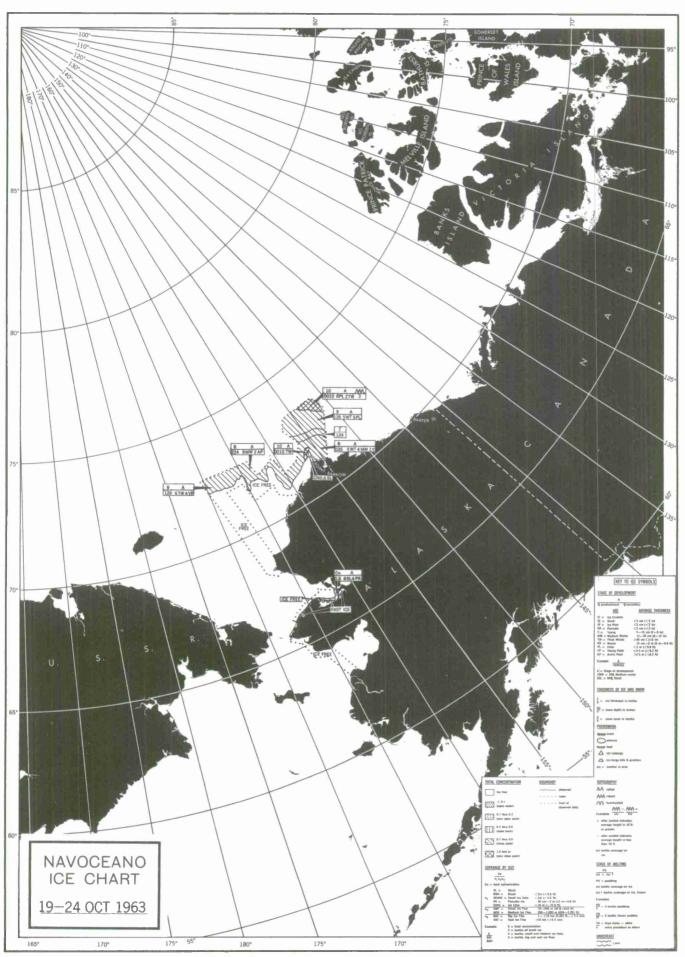


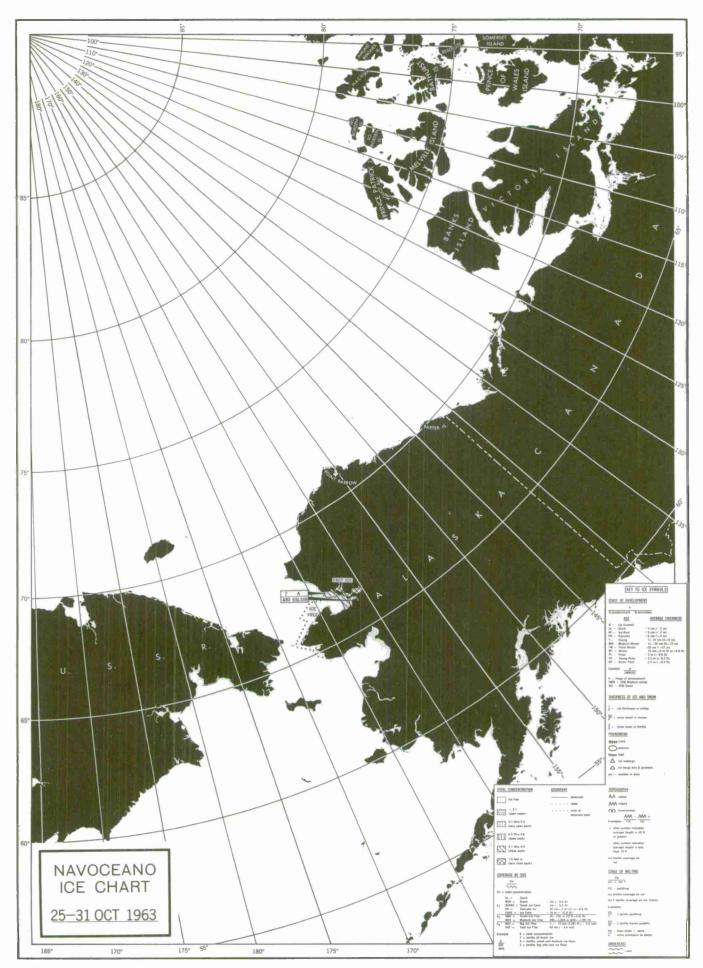


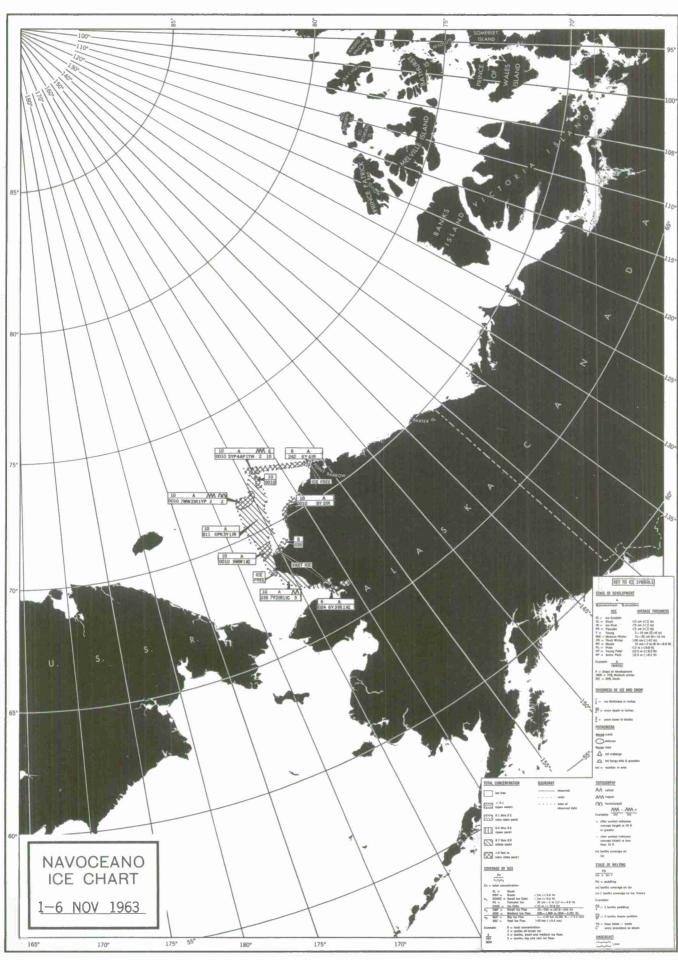


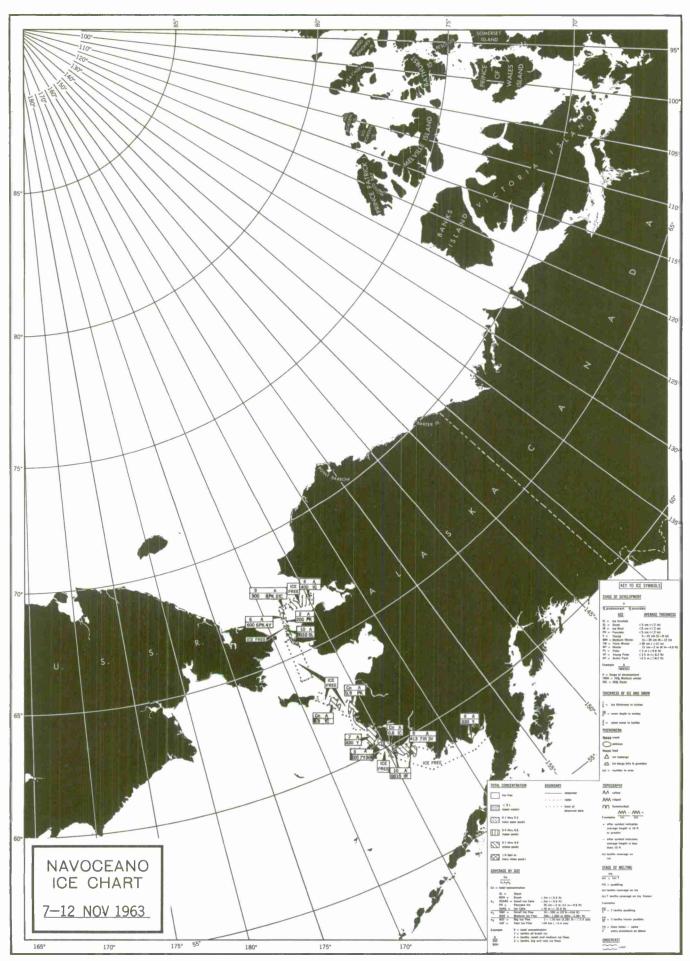


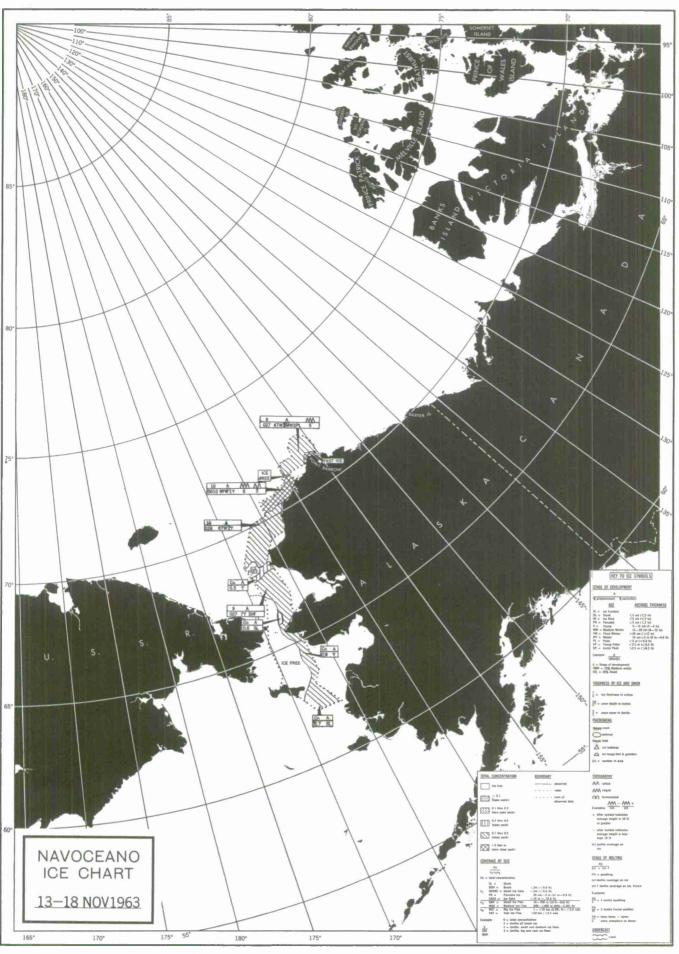


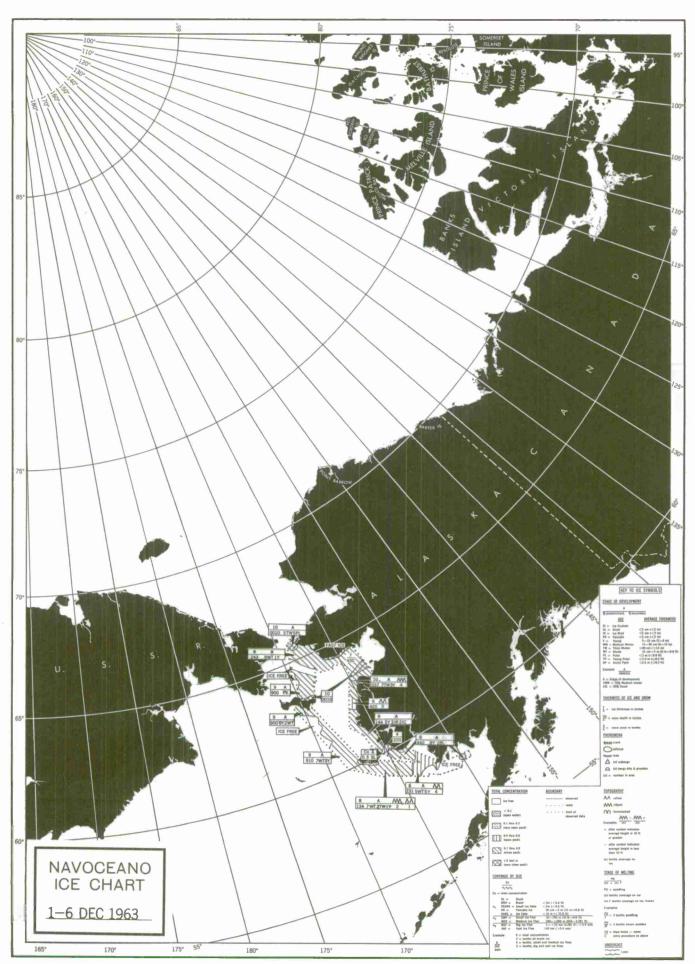












U.S. Navel Oceanographic Office.
REPORT OF THE ICE OBSERVING AND FORECASTING PROGRAM, 1963, by Oceanographic Prediction Division, May 1965.
188 pages, including 177 figures and 1 table. (SP-70(63))

A summary of NAVOCEANO and Danish ice operations during 1953 is presented. Operational aspects of obtaining and disseminating ice information and the ice forecasting and observing program are discussed. Ice charts depict observed synoptic ice conditions throughout the year. Locations of oceanographic stations occupied in the polar and subpolar regions are included.

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